

SAVE
THE
GIRLS

MASON LONG

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SAVE THE GIRLS.

BY
MASON LONG,
OF FORT WAYNE, IND.,
Author of "The Converted Gambler."

EIGHTH EDITION—FORTY-FIFTH THOUSAND.

THE TRADE SUPPLIED BY
MASON LONG, FORT WAYNE, INDIANA.

ENTERED ACCORDING TO ACT OF CONGRESS, IN THE YEAR 1880, BY
I. S. FELGER,
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PRINTED AND BOUND AT
THE ALDINE PRINTING WORKS,
CINCINNATI, O.

PREFACE.

We hear of reformed men on all sides ; there are reformed criminals of every kind in the pulpits, on the rostrums, in the church, telling the story of their past lives, that all who hear may heed the terrible warning and profit by the example; but we hear little or nothing of "reformed women." Efforts are constantly being made to elevate and save degraded men, but degraded women are left by the wayside to perish. The author has long pondered over this subject, and wondered why a lost woman isn't just as well worth saving as a lost man, and why she can not be as easily reached as he. In this little volume, I have endeavored, in my humble way, to plead the cause of these wretched outcasts, and present their claims for consideration. Fully aware that the subject I have discussed is a most delicate one, I have endeavored to handle it in such a manner that no right minded person can take any offense. The book might better have been written by some abler pen than mine, but one thing I beg to say: that no word in

it has been penned with any motive save that of doing good. If my humble efforts direct the attention of all good people to our erring sisters, and lead them to hold up the hands of their clergymen in efforts to save these wretched beings, I shall feel my book has accomplished its object—that my labor has not been in vain.

MASON LONG.

FORT WAYNE, IND., August, 1880.

TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE
PREFACE, - - - - -	5
CHAPTER I.	
A Page from Real Life — Introductory, - - - - -	9
CHAPTER II.	
The Principal Causes of the Social Evil, - - - - -	32
CHAPTER III.	
The Evils of Dancing — Sad Results of a Public Ball, - - - - -	50
CHAPTER IV.	
A Lost Woman Saved Through her Mother's Love — How a Girl was Snatched From the Verge of a Precipice, - - - - -	108
CHAPTER V.	
The Perils of Poverty — Pitfalls for the Working Girls — How They are Led to Destruction, - - - - -	133
CHAPTER VI.	
Some Temptations of City Life — The Theater — The Race Course — Street Flirtations, etc., - - - - -	175

CHAPTER VII.

The Life of a Fallen Queen—From a Palace to an Alley, and then to an Insane Asylum, - - - -	PAGE 199
---	-------------

CHAPTER VIII.

Society Buying a Slave—The Fate of the Outcast—Fashionable Immorality—Marital Infidelity—“A Harp for the Magdalens.” - - - -	217
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CHAPTER IX.

How to Save Our Erring Sisters—Duty of the Church—What has been Done in this Field, - - - -	239
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SAVE THE GIRLS.

CHAPTER I.

A PAGE FROM REAL LIFE — INTRODUCTORY.

In one of the large cities of this country, a few years ago, resided a man whose life seemed to have been crowned with all the blessings which this world could bestow. In the prime of a vigorous manhood, in the possession of perfect health, the owner of a vast property from which he derived a princely income, the occupant of an elegant and beautiful home, filled with all the attractions that money could purchase or the most luxurious taste could suggest, he was envied by all as one of the most happy and fortunate of men. His family consisted of a lovely wife, several years his junior, of a son just verging upon

man's estate, and of a daughter just budding into maidenhood. Upon this family the husband and father lavished all the affection of his nature. His wife, who was queen of her husband's heart, was also a petted queen of society. She desired nothing that money would furnish which was not given her. She dispensed to her friends an elegant hospitality which few could rival. Her entertainments were of the most elaborate description. She enjoyed all the advantages and pleasures of travel, dressed in the most fashionable style, had her splendid carriage and her box at the opera; in a word, she lacked for nothing that wealth could procure or the world could give, that would contribute to her happiness.

Upon the son and daughter both parents showered their love. The mother—as mothers always do—fairly doted upon her son, while the father worshiped his daughter, and in his mind often pictured for her a brilliant future. It is hardly necessary to say that this son and this daughter, upon whom so much love was bestowed, and about whom so many fond

hopes clustered, were petted and humored to an excessive degree. The young man bore his father's full name, and was reared with a view to becoming the paternal successor as the manager of the latter's extensive business. His early youth gave promise of a brilliant career in the future. Inheriting his father's splendid physique and perfect health, he was really a model of manly beauty. Possessed of a fine intellect, and naturally inclined to be industrious and studious, there was every thing about him to justify the pride and confidence which his parents felt in him. When he left home to enter college, his record was pure and unsullied ; but the temptations of college life proved too strong for him to withstand, and he readily succumbed to them. The social glass, which had always been tendered to guests at his home, possessed a charm for him which grew with each succeeding day. The gambling table was as attractive and dazzling to him as it had proved to thousands who had gone before. The seductions of the strange woman made him a not unwilling victim ; and in a few

short years, the young man who had been the subject of so much pride and hope and affection was morally, physically and mentally broken down, when he should have been just entering upon the prime of life.

Who can paint the deep grief with which the fond father, with the burden of advancing years just beginning to weigh upon him, saw his only son, the boy upon whom he had expected to lean in his old age, becoming a gambler, a drunkard and a *roué*? Who can picture the heart-breaking agony of the mother, as she saw her first born selling his birthright for a mess of pottage, passing his hours in unholy pleasures, drinking the forbidden potions of vice to the very dregs, wrecking himself, morally, mentally and physically, preparing for a premature death and a dishonored grave? Alas, the anguish of that father, the tears and sobs of that mother, over their wayward boy! How they strove to reclaim him to a life of dignity and usefulness! How they sought to cover from the gaze of the world his vices and his weaknesses! How they tried to wean him

from the degrading passions to which he seemed to have surrendered himself, body and soul! How they welcomed him home with words of forgiveness and pity after a drunken debauch, and pleaded with him to forsake his evil ways for the paths of honor and virtue! How they hoped against hope that he would finish "sowing his wild oats" ere it became too late, and live to be an honor to himself and a credit to his family!

Finally, the young man showed signs of remorse. He gave indications of an awakened conscience. Broken in health, downcast in spirit, crippled in fortune, sated with the degrading pleasures of the world in which he had wasted the best years of his life, he returned to his father's home, and settled down to a demure and quiet existence. His mother's arms were opened to receive him, his father's benefactions were showered upon him. The prodigal son, tired of eating the husks of sin, had returned home. He had squeezed the lemon of vice, and thrown away the skin. He had exhausted the

attractions of dissipation. In a word, he was a jaded profligate; a broken down *roué*; having burned the candle at both ends he was prematurely old. But this young man, tainted in body, seared in soul, weakened in intellect by the excesses through which he had passed, was welcomed back to the elegant mansion; was given the seat of honor at the family table, was clothed in fine raiment and feasted upon the fatted calf. All of his shortcomings were not only forgiven but forgotten. In a few years he led a pure and beautiful young woman to the marriage altar; and to-day he occupies the position of a trusted and honored citizen.

But there was deeper trouble yet in store for those parents.

The daughter, during the years which her brother had passed in sensual dissipation and beastly indulgence, had reached womanhood. Beautiful in face, faultless in figure, charming in manners, graceful in movement, possessing an affectionate disposition, an ardent, susceptible temperament and a natural love for gayety

and dress, trained in all the polite accomplishments, it is not surprising that she became, in her first "season" a reigning "belle," the recognized idol of society. With her disposition and temperament she was naturally in love with the world, and completely fascinated with the allurements of the thoughtless circles in which she moved. Her life was one continued round of pleasure. Balls, parties, operas, theaters, receptions, *routs*, followed each other in quick succession. In the parlors of the wealthy and aristocratic, this ardent, susceptible maiden mingled with men of property and high position, whose morals were as low as their social pretensions were lofty. Moving in this unnatural and heated atmosphere, breathing an air polluted by well dressed libertines and aristocratic rakes, her head turned by the flattery and adulation which were poured out upon her, what more natural than that this fair young woman should err, and fall a victim to the lecherous wiles of one of those selfish, heartless scoundrels whom society welcomes to its drawing-rooms, and

feasts in its banquet halls? The petted daughter of fashion, like so many of her sisters, was led, in an unguarded moment, into the meshes of the tempter. From that hour her fate was sealed. A blight was cast upon her life and happiness, as deadly and fatal as that of the pitiless plague upon its helpless victim. Her sin was with her day and night. A deadly pallor succeeded the lovely tint of her rare complexion; her heavy eyelids and dull, leaden eyes, told too plainly of long, sleepless nights, and troubled dreams. Unable to conceal her shame, she left, in the dead hour of night, the home of her youth, with all its comforts and luxuries, and went out into the world, a miserable, ruined girl.

The parents read the few lines their daughter had penned before leaving their roof, with feelings of the most abject despair. That the fair girl whom father had worshiped and mother had cherished with so much tenderness and affection; whose life had been a pathway strewn with roses; whose every whim had

been gratified and every caprice acceded to; that she should bring dishonor and shame upon herself and them, was a blow so terrible, so sudden, so paralyzing, that the deep grief of the wronged ones could for a time find no expression in words or tears. Their mute, dumb agony was of that intensity, that hopelessness, which can not be described in words. But they determined to bear their disgrace and suffer their humiliation in proud silence. They trembled when they thought what society would say; but society, at least, should never know how they suffered. They would never mention their daughter's name again, even in each other's presence. To them she should be as one who was dead; as one whom they had consigned to the grave. And so the night of gloom and darkness settled down upon that once happy home, where before all had been light, and mirth, and flowers, and music, and happiness. The spacious parlors were closed to the world; the doors of the stately mansion no longer flew open to the butterflies of fashion and the devotees of pleasure; where before

had been revelry and feasting were now solitude and darkness.

And the erring daughter, what of her? Where did she wander when she left, forever, the happy home of her childhood and youth? Did she find helping hands and sympathetic hearts in her misery and despair? Did father and mother and brother follow her footsteps, and endeavor to woo her back to the paths from which a single false step had taken her? Alas, no! She roamed away, in the blackness of night and the hopelessness of despair, going she knew not whither, tending she knew not where. Dark thoughts of suicide entered her mind, but fear of the great hereafter stayed her hand from the work of self-destruction. On, on, she went, anywhere to get away from the familiar scenes of her youth and childhood; away from the imposing palaces where she had been so often a welcome and petted guest; away from the long rows of stately store-houses where she had been wont to deck herself with costly jewelry and fine raiment; away from sights and faces which could but

remind her of the happy past; away to the great Metropolis in the distance where, at least, she could bury herself among strangers and conceal her shame from the companions of former years. To the distant city she went, and entered upon an unequal struggle with the world. The slight resources she possessed when she abandoned her home were soon exhausted. She had been taught many accomplishments, but they seemed of no avail as a means of gaining a livelihood. Her slender, white fingers were wholly unaccustomed to toil. To household duties she was a stranger; and though her proud spirit revolted at the idea of domestic service, she was ready for any thing but harlotry to avert the starvation which threatened. She could sew a little, and sing a little and dance a little. She might teach music or teach school, but alas! she could get no pupils. She could obtain no patrons as a seamstress. Day after day she left the humble lodging to which she had been reduced—such a fearful contrast with her luxurious apartments of former days—and walked up and down the

long streets of the great city, asking in vain for honest toil by which to gain a subsistence. Work was nowhere to be found ; but suggestions and proposals which brought the blush of shame to her cheek, and made the hot blood of indignation stir within her, were frequent responses to her applications for employment.

Hope at last died within the poor girl's heart. There seemed but three things before her : Death by suicide, actual starvation or a life of shame. From the last her soul revolted in horror, and she determined upon suicide as the alternative. But, as before, her courage failed her. She dared not plunge into the awful gulf of eternity, without a single hope for salvation. Her thoughts turned again, as they had done so frequently before, to the home she had lost ; to the indulgent mother and the doting father whose hearts had always been so responsive to her every appeal. She had often tried to write to them, but as often her pen had dropped unused by her side, and the white paper was untouched, save by the

tears which fell from her eyes. But now it was suicide, starvation or open shame. Would an appeal for help from an erring, suffering daughter be refused? Would father and mother not relent somewhat toward her whom they had once so idolized? After a desperate struggle she mastered her pride and sent to her parents a letter begging their forgiveness, and asking, not for the privilege of returning home, for that she did not then desire; not for recognition as their daughter; that she dared not hope for; but for the means of keeping body and soul together. Weary days she waited for an answer, but none came. No word of forgiveness, no message of sympathy, no means of help came from those parents, who had worked for years to save their reckless son, and who had welcomed him, fresh from a life of debauchery, and reeking with the pollution of his shameless orgies, to a seat of honor at the family board. But the daughter, who had made a single false step, was to them as one dead; and her letter lay unread and unopened. Against her the doors of her

former happy home were closed, and from her the hearts of her parents were turned in anger.

The broken-hearted girl, losing the newborn hope which had sustained her for the past few days, was again reduced to utter despair. While in this frame of mind her eye fell upon an advertisement in a newspaper for "fifty handsomely formed ladies to dance in the ballet at _____'s Theater." She was one of several hundred to respond to this advertisement at the manager's office of the theater. She appeared before the scrutinizing gaze of the stage manager, who passed some coarse compliments upon her still beautiful face and her fine figure. She was accepted ; and after a few days severe training was duly installed as a member of the ballet in the gorgeous spectacle at _____'s Theater. Her wages were trifling, but were at least sufficient to maintain life, and in the meantime the unfortunate young woman sought for other and more congenial employment. The atmosphere of the theater was distasteful to her ; it was repugnant to her innate delicacy and refinement ;

but no other avenue of employment was open to her. In a few weeks she lost even this wretched means of subsistence. The spectacle was withdrawn and she was left again utterly without resources.

In the ballet her face and figure had attracted the attention of the manager of a variety theater. He sought her out and offered her an engagement at his establishment. At first she declined; but grim want was again across her pathway, and as a last resort she was compelled to accept. In the variety theater she first appeared in the ballet, and finally as a "star" dancer and ballad singer. To please her audiences, and keep her position, she had to gradually relinquish her delicacy, and abandon her modesty. She was forced to sing indelicate songs, and dance in indecent costumes. She repeatedly sought to get other and more reputable employment, but as often failed. She became a favorite with the male audiences who crowded the theater night after night. Her picture was prominent on the bills and was placarded in the bar-

rooms and saloons. But as she advanced in her "profession" so called, she loathed and despised herself. She at last began losing her self-respect. She was surrounded by the vile and depraved of both sexes, and moved in an atmosphere of vice and profligacy. She sought in every possible way to drive from her mind the torturing recollections of the past, and to keep from her vision the anticipations of the terrible future, to which she felt herself surely and rapidly drifting.

From this point her descent was rapid. She tried in vain to escape from herself in drink, and to bury her troubles in the oblivion produced by liquor. Finally she cast off all restraint and became desperate and reckless. What was there to hope for or strive for? Was she not hated and despised by that world in which she had formerly moved? Had not her father and mother cast her off, and did they not regard her as dead to them? Was not the home of her childhood closed against her? What was before her but shame and death? She abandoned herself to her fate.

In the "green-room" of the theater in which she danced and sung, there were none more gay and reckless than she. Wine was her only solace. She proceeded rapidly on her downward path. She had been supplanted in the favor of the patrons of the theater by a new "star," and was no longer profitable to the manager, who therefore refused her further employment. Her habits were such that she could get no engagement elsewhere, and she was soon duly installed as the mistress of a notorious gambler. When he tired of her she became the inmate of a gilded palace of sin. Another step downward and she was the vile outcast of the streets, shunned and despised even by other fallen women who had not reached so low a depth. The last act of the tragedy soon followed.

The story was told in the daily papers as one of such frequent occurrence as to be unworthy of extended comment. It was prefaced with the stereotyped headline "One More Unfortunate," and it told how the body of a young woman had been found in the lake;

how the face was still beautiful, despite the marks of dissipation it bore ; how the coroner's jury rendered a verdict of death by suicide, and how the body was buried in the Potter's Field without a single mourner to shed a tear, a solitary loved one to cross the hands, or smooth with affectionate touch the raven hair, or the slightest indication that one person in all the wide world cared for the poor, erring, heart-broken woman who had sought refuge from a life of degradation and misery in the cold, gloomy waters of the lake.

This is no fancy sketch. It is true, even to the minutest details. The family referred to will be recognized by many who read these pages. The history of the poor girl was related in full in one of our leading journals. Whether the parents of the suicide knew of her fate, I can not tell, but I do know that a few months after her dead body was found floating in the lake, the remains of her father were followed to the cemetery by a long procession of mourners, affording a striking contrast to her solitary burial.

At twenty, a young, beautiful, happy girl, the pride of a luxurious home, the pet of society ; at twenty-four, an outcast suicide in a great city, even her name obliterated, and her star set in a night of blackest darkness !

There are thousands upon thousands of such cases constantly occurring all over the land. The columns of our great daily papers teem with the sad stories of such wrecked lives and broken hearts. The police records of our large cities are full of such sad romances.

Who is to blame for such grim tragedies ? Can the civilization of the 19th century, can the Christianity which is sending missionaries to bear the Gospel to the uttermost corners of the earth, can the charity which is trying in so many ways to raise and elevate lost humanity, do nothing to prevent such mournful sacrifices ? Can society not stay the slaughter of innocent and lovely virgins at the hands of brutal lust ? Can the pulpit do nothing ? Nor the press ?

I maintain that much can be done by all of these agencies in this direction, and the object

of this unpretentious little volume is to do something toward awakening public sentiment on this all-important matter. I am aware that the subject is a delicate one, and one to be handled with care, lest what I say may have the opposite effect from what is intended. But it can not, must not be ignored. If plain speaking be necessary, then plain speaking we must have. I wish to say nothing which can be regarded as offensive, or construed as indelicate. My main object is to point out the numerous temptations which society throws around young women, and to which so many of them succumb. I want to show the fatal allurements of the dance, the theater, and many other popular social amusements. I want to show how society pets and humors and caresses the vilest of men, and bestows honors upon wealthy libertines, educated *roués* and aristocratic rakes. Can one touch pitch without being defiled? Can innocent maidens come in constant contact with those depraved men whom we by courtesy style "men of the world," without being smirched and polluted? Society wel-

comes to its privileges and pleasures the jaded debauchee, the worn-out profligate, and when he leads to the altar a fair and lovely young maiden, who is the very personification of purity and virtue, society smiles with approbation.

In the case above related, the son was for years addicted to all kinds of dissipation and debauchery. He reveled in the vilest excesses, and plunged into the most disgraceful orgies, but his father's house was always open to him, his mother's arms were ever ready to receive him. Society welcomed him to its ranks, and when, jaded with his life of profligacy and debauchery, he sought in marriage a pure and spotless maiden, there was none to say him nay. But the daughter, for a single false step, that naturally resulted from the surroundings which society had thrown about her, was disowned and sent out into the world an outcast. No effort was made to redeem her, no attempt to save her. She became to her parents as one who was dead; and even her appeals for the necessities of life were unopened and unheeded.

Struggling for months to save herself from ruin, she was at last literally forced into the paths of open shame and driven to a suicide's death. Society has her blood upon its hands, and the loss of her soul is charged to society's account.

It is a painful truth that a fallen woman has scarcely any chance whatever of reformation. Thousands of prostitutes would to-day abandon their lives of wretchedness and misery if there were any other avenue open to them. But every door is closed in their faces. They are shunned and avoided on every hand. They can get no reputable employment if it be once known that they have sinned. Their own sex is the most relentless and unforgiving in its persecution of them. An erring daughter finds, as a rule, her father more ready to forgive than her mother; her brothers more willing than her sisters. Why this is so I do not know, but that it is so I do know, and this, I presume, no one will gainsay for a moment.

How different it is with a man. It matters not how low, how vile, how degraded he may

become, there is always encouragement for him to reform. The female sex especially is anxious to elevate him, while it would relentlessly turn its back upon any poor, wretched, sinning woman, who might desire to abandon her loathsome life and enter upon a new existence.

In this little book I shall relate many facts and incidents which have come under my personal observation, and which, I trust, will open the eyes of my readers to the necessity of trying to save "fallen women" as well as "fallen men."

CHAPTER II

THE PRINCIPAL CAUSES OF THE SOCIAL EVIL.

Fallen women owe their ruin to a variety of causes. A large number of them have a natural tendency to vice, which is born in them, being inherited from their ancestors. Such are, in thought and feeling, prostitutes from youth, and, at the first opportunity, become profligate, either openly or covertly. Many of them remain chaste in body, owing simply to a lack of opportunity to indulge their natural propensities, but their minds are without purity, their passions and sentiments are coarse, and the sexual sin they crave is just as much theirs as though actually committed in deed, as it is in thought. These women, who are naturally impure, become prostitutes from choice. When they are not openly profligate they are often secretly so.

Before marriage they frequently cross the line of purity, after marriage they are unfaithful wives and heartless mothers. They impart to society a low, coarse tone; they lead in setting the fashions and in fastening upon society the amusements, excesses and dissipations which in turn cause so many weak women to go astray; they become the heroines of sensational divorce trials and racy scandals, the details of which fill column after column of our daily papers, and pollute and contaminate the current literature of the day. These women rear children who inherit their natural propensities, and who, in turn, develop and disseminate the evil which is born in them. The class of women whose natural tendencies are lewd, whether they embrace open prostitution or indulge in secret *liaisons*, or even if, from lack of opportunity, they do neither (and are morally no better than if they did), are, of course, the most difficult to reclaim. Those who are essentially and inherently bad, while they can not, of course, be pronounced beyond redemption, are certainly very unpromising

subjects, because there is nothing in them to appeal to, no aspirations for better things to cultivate, no leaning towards purity to encourage.

But, happily, a majority of impure women are not of this class. A vast majority of them love virtue better than vice, purity better than lewdness. They have been led astray from various causes, and having taken the one false step which, according to our code of social ethics, makes a woman forever an outcast, find themselves forced into the paths of sin, which they tread until they fill premature and dis honored graves. Many there are whose ruin can be ascribed to an ardent, susceptible nature, which has been worked upon by designing villains whom society gives free license to prey upon the lambs within its ranks. These poor creatures have been deceived and, in a moment of weakness, have been led astray and fallen never to rise again. Their betrayers, having accomplished the evil they intended, turn their backs upon their victims; society closes its doors to them; the churches practi-

cally ignore them, and there is nothing left to them but shame, and misery, and death. The unfortunates of this class — those who have been betrayed, ruined and abandoned, who have sinned with another under a solemn promise of marriage, made only to be broken, who have “loved, not wisely, but too well”— are deserving of all the sympathy which can be bestowed upon them. They are not naturally bad; on the contrary, they have the qualities which go to make pure, loving wives and affectionate and devoted mothers; weaker, perhaps, than some of their more fortunate sisters; more sorely tempted, possibly, than others; exposed, mayhap, at a tender age, when, without knowledge of the world, they were unable to appreciate the dreadful consequences of the step they took; too trustful and confiding, doubtless, in men who came to them with society’s endorsement; lacking, perchance, the watchful, anxious care of a true mother; thrown ofttimes amid surroundings which contributed to their fall; surely these unhappy creatures are worth saving, and no

effort should be spared by Christian people to reclaim them from the lives of awful misery which they are forced to lead, and in which they find no enjoyment or pleasure. Society, which was much to blame for their first lapses from virtue, is entirely responsible for their subsequent career; because, having once sinned, society pointed the finger of scorn at them and said: "Henceforward and forever you are outcasts. No honorable employment is open to you. You will be shunned and despised by all. You can not come into our churches because you are tainted and would contaminate others." And society, for once, has cruelly and remorselessly kept its word.

Many fallen women have chosen their lives of shame because of poverty. Thrown upon their own efforts to fight an unequal battle with the world, without any resources, natural or acquired, to enable them to earn their bread, finding all the avenues of employment for women greatly overcrowded, toiling, perhaps, for a beggarly pittance for wealthy

Christian (?) merchants and philanthropists, whose donations to public charities are princely and munificent; tired, discouraged and heartsick, these unfortunate women have at last concluded to exchange a life of virtue, with its burden of suffering and privation, for an existence of vice, with its accompaniments of ease and luxury. How many thousands of this class have in sackcloth and ashes bitterly lamented the desperate choice they made? How many thousands would gladly exchange their lives of shame for any honorable employment, however humble, which would afford them the means of existing decently and honestly? Surely society is, to a great extent, responsible for their ruin also, because their poverty was one consequence of the false system of education and early training which society has adopted; because society justifies the employer in compelling women to toil like slaves for starvation wages, and finally because society makes no effort to provide them with that honorable employment which would have saved them from lives of shame and wretchedness?

Surely these unhappy creatures are worth saving.

There are thousands of frail women who have been led to embrace their dreadful calling to satisfy a love of dress and display which is a natural failing of the sex. Society has fostered and encouraged a passion for extravagance in attire which they have not had the means to gratify, and which has led them, by easy stages, and almost unconsciously to themselves, over the dreadful abyss into a gulf from which it seems impossible for them to return. A vast army of the wives and daughters of respectable mechanics, laborers, farmers, clerks and others of moderate incomes have been led by the fondness for dress which society has encouraged, to sacrifice themselves and blast forever their happiness, both in this world and in the world to come. Most of these weak, erring creatures may be and possibly are beyond redemption, but something can, at least, be done to save others from following in their fatal footsteps, by discouraging the excessive love of dress which is the bane and

curse of American women, by inculcating principles of independence and honesty which will lead men and women to live within their means, and to refrain from vain attempts to rival or eclipse those who have the money to warrant expenditures which would prove ruinous to those of more moderate purses.

It will be seen that, in my opinion—and it is also the opinion of many who have given the subject the closest investigation and the most careful thought—a very large majority of our fallen women are such, not from choice, not from inherent badness, not from a predisposition to evil, but because they have been made such by poverty, by mistaken pride, or by undue confidence in wicked men. I am not apologizing for them, nor striving for a moment to extenuate their failings or gloss over their sins. But I think the truth can not be too often stated, that these wretched women have immortal souls to save; that with all their faults, their crimes, if you will, they are still our sisters, they are still human beings; that society, which is in most cases

responsible for their ruin, owes to them every effort to reclaim them ; and that the Church, which is ever ready to extend the right hand of fellowship to the vilest man who expresses his repentance, should not fail to labor for the salvation of the women who have gone astray.

But there is a still greater work for society and the church than the reclamation of these erring creatures. It is a frightful thought that the great army of impure women receives thousands of recruits every year. Its ranks are kept constantly full to repletion. Every year many thousands of sin-stained, broken-hearted women go down to fill the dishonored graves of courtesans ; and every year thousands of young girls step forward and take their places in the grand cavalcade of shame, despair and disease, which is pressing forward to a terrible death, and a still more terrible eternity. It is to save these young women from the awful fate which seems to await them that society should lift its hand, and that the press should herald its warnings ; that the pulpit should

raise its voice and that the church should exert its energies. There goes a young girl full of life and health and innocence, possessed of all that is needed to make her a happy wife and mother, the pure, devoted queen of some good man's heart, the center of some cheerful domestic circle, the mother of lovely children. But the libertine, cold-blooded, heartless, and fiendish, is on her trail. Her virgin charms have awakened his diabolical desires, and he has picked her out for his prey. Society gives him the opportunities he craves, and he improves them to the utmost. Young, ardent, susceptible, ignorant of the ways of the world, innocent of all evil intent, knowing nothing of the depth of man's perfidy and wickedness, this beautiful young creature is pressing forward, unconsciously, to her ruin. She meets her tempter at the ball, the theater, the *rout*; her virgin form is oftentimes enclosed in his passionate embrace in the giddy revolutions of the dance, while he breathes into her willing ears his story of love and devotion, told to others so often before. She rides and drives with him,

she spends evenings alone with him at her father's house, she is already in the toils. Is there no one to save her from the fate which impends? Is there no friendly hand to be extended to snatch her from the abyss to which she is hastening, no kindly voice to tell her that this man, this pet of society, is a seducer and a libertine who would for ever blast her life as he has already blasted the lives of others who have threaded the same dreadful path she is just about to enter? Alas, no. The man who is pursuing her with the relentlessness with which a hunter follows his prey, comes to her with society's endorsement. She has met him in the parlors of the wealthy, and at the tables of the refined. He is a "society favorite." He has education, wealth, position. He is handsome in face, elegant in dress, attractive in figure. Society knows the evil he has done; society knows the families he has desolated, the homes he has invaded, the lives he has ruined, the hearts he has broken; but society closes its eyes and pronounces him a "splendid fellow," a "little gay," per-

haps a "trifle fast," but, to tell the truth, only more fascinating because of all that. He dances divinely; he is witty and brilliant, and fashionable mothers proudly introduce him to their daughters, while dignified fathers extend to him the freedom of their homes. And now he has made another victim, and the charming young girl of whom he has been in pursuit has succumbed to his wiles. He will betray and desert her, as he has betrayed and deserted others. By and by her sin will become known; society will affix upon her brow the brand of shame, never to be erased; society will drive her forth to be an outcast upon the face of the earth; father and mother will close the doors of their home against her; and another recruit will be added to the vast army of the fallen sisterhood. And she is only one of the many, many thousands who join this same army of shame and death every year, to fill the places of thousands of others who have just plunged into the dread hereafter, with all the burden of sin and misery upon their lost souls.

The “gay fellow” who worked this ruin is a “gay fellow” still ; he is as popular in society as ever, and he already has his eye fixed upon another victim, upon whom, with the opportunities which society so kindly affords him, he expects soon to fasten his lecherous grasp. The unhappy victim of his lust is shunned by the world as if her very presence were contamination, but he is honored, petted and feasted by those who tramp her down in the mire.

Well has a gifted Indiana writer (Dr. J. A. Houser) said :

“Not one good word can be said of the seducer ; there is not an excuse that human benevolence can offer for him. The house-breaker, the highwayman, the midnight assassin, are each and all far better than he—the vampire of society, the personification of villainy, the embodiment of lust and pollution, a moving, walking, breathing lie, with a soul blacker than the smutted walls of the infernal regions. His thoughts by day should be thoughts of woe, his dreams by night dreams

of despair. The wrongs he has inflicted on others should rise up out of the graves of his victims and haunt his every step, and continually whisper in his ears *death and judgment*; at night they should gather about his couch, and with the wail of a lost soul, wave the torch of hell around his bed, until his affrighted spirit would cry aloud for mercy, to be forgiven, and then for death."

Rev. Henry Ward Beecher, in his Lectures to Young Men, calls them to view this picture:

"Look out upon that fallen creature whose gay sally through the street calls out the significant laugh of bad men, the pity of good men, and the horror of the pure. Was not her cradle as pure as ever a loved infant pressed? As young womanhood advanced, and her foreshadowed graces ripened to the bud and burst into bloom, health glowed in her cheek, love looked from her eye, and purity was an atmosphere around her. Nor does the rosy sunset blush deeper than her cheek, at the first thought of evil.

O Prince of torment! if thou hast transforming power, give some relief to this once innocent

child, whom another hath corrupted ! Let thy deepest damnation seize him who brought her hither. Let his coronation be upon the very mount of torment, and the rain of fiery hail be his salutation ! He shall be crowned with thorns poisoned and anguish-bearing ; and every woe beat upon him, and every wave of hell roll over the first risings of baffled hope. Thy guilty thoughts, and guilty deeds shall flit after thee with bows which never break, and quivers forever emptying but never exhausted ! If Satan hath one dart more poisoned than another ; if God hath one bolt more transfixing and blasting than another ; if there be one hideous spirit more unrelenting than others, they shall be *thine*, most execrable wretch ! who led her to *forsake the guide of her youth, and to abandon the covenant of her God.*"

If society did its duty, the seducer would find his occupation gone, and there would be so many fewer recruits for the great army of shame, so many fewer victims for the annual sacrifice of the fallen. If society did its duty it would place a brand upon this man, instead

of upon his prey ; it would drive him from its ranks a disgraced, dishonored man, at whom every decent man and woman would point the finger of scorn. If society did its duty, our "best citizens" and their families would not open their doors to an impure man, any more than they do to an impure woman. If society did its duty it would make the standard of virtue just as high for men as for women, and the penalty of sexual vice just as severe for the former as for the latter. If society did its duty in these respects alone, not to speak of others in which it now fails, the number of women who yearly cross the threshold of virtue would be reduced at least one-half. How much of shame and misery and suffering and disgrace would be saved to the world ! How many broken hearts would be prevented ! How many murders and suicides would be averted ! How strong a check would be given to the great carnival of vice and crime which is constantly being held from year to year, in all the large cities of the land ! How many immortal souls, now doomed to eternal

death, would be saved for a blessed immortality !

Surely, there is a terrible responsibility resting upon society in this matter, and as society is composed of individuals, it is a responsibility which each individual must share to the extent of his influence and power in society. It behooves, therefore, every man and every woman who feels a desire to benefit and elevate the race, to frown upon and shun the licentious men whose occupation would be gone were society to ostracise them. It behooves us, also, to discourage such social amusements as are calculated to lead young women astray, the most important of which, in my humble opinion, is dancing. So long as the dance is recognized and maintained as a social feature, there will be no lack of recruits for the ranks of prostitution. By the dance, I do not mean alone the public ball, which is, in itself, a prolific cause of ruined womanhood, but also the private "hop," the "club soiree," the fashionable reception. Of all the devices for exciting the most powerful, and at the

same time the most dangerous, passions of our race, I regard the dance as the most artful, subtle, and effective. In other chapters I shall speak at length, freely and boldly, concerning the evils of dancing, and the terrible consequences to which it leads.

CHAPTER III.

THE EVILS OF DANCING — SAD RESULTS OF A
PUBLIC BALL.

The elegant mansion is all ablaze with light and brilliancy. The air is heavily laden with the perfumes of lovely flowers, arranged about the spacious parlors with all the profuse luxuriance of nature. Floods of dazzling light stream forth from scores of gilded chandeliers. Soft, velvety carpets relax gently under the tread of host and hostess, in their rich attire. The costly furniture, the flowing curtains, the frescoing and ornamentations of the walls, the pictures and statuary which everywhere abound, bear testimony to the wealth and prodigality of the owner of all this magnificence, and add to the brilliancy of a scene which, by and by, when it is radiant with lovely faces, and flashing eyes, and blazing dia-

monds, and sylph-like forms, and when the soft, bewitching strains of music float dreamily through the air, will lack nothing of all that we have ever conceived of fairy land.

As we write the scene is changing, and growing in animation every moment. At an hour when nature dictates a wooing of the "sweet restorer, sleep," splendid equipages are rolling up to the entrance of the stately mansion and discharging their precious burdens of lovely women and gallant men, who are entering the imposing edifice with glowing anticipations of a night of pleasure. Soon the spacious parlors are filled with the merry revellers; husbands and wives, fathers and daughters, brothers and sisters, compose the gay and thoughtless gathering; and it is almost midnight when the night's pleasure is begun. The musicians have begun their labors; the liberal host has opened his sideboard, and the gentlemen have inspired themselves with liberal draughts of wine or liquor, and, flushed with the stimulant, enter upon the night's revelry with zest and energy. When the clock

strikes twelve the festivities have scarcely been fairly initiated. By and by supper is served ; there is more wine, of which both sexes partake ; and, inflamed and excited by the effects of the rich food and the stimulating drink, the guests resume their dancing, and all goes “merry as a marriage bell.”

Waltz succeeds waltz ; the “Boston dip” is followed by the “glide,” and the “glide” by the “racket.” Two o’clock, three o’clock comes, and still the dancers are at their sport. The woman of fashion, who has left her children at home in the care of servants ; young girls whose health and happiness demand regular rest and sleep ; ladies who are professed Christians, but whose love for the world is stronger than their love for the church, revolve from the embrace of one man to that of another, and finally, when tired and wronged nature asserts itself, are escorted to their carriages and driven home, perhaps with father, husband, or brother, but oftener with another. During the night wine has flowed freely, and there is scarcely a gentleman who has not par-

taken liberally, and not a few "ladies" who have also quaffed the ruby liquid that their cheeks might be flushed and their bodies sustained to withstand the draughts upon their vitality. The most dangerous passions have been excited by the wine and the dancing ; "flirtations," so called, have been carried on by the married and single of both sexes ; improprieties have been committed which would be impossible in the light of day and without the surroundings of the ball-room ; words have been whispered into the ears of lovely women, words of honeyed compliment, of subtle flattery, of deep import, which at another time would not have been listened to and could not have been uttered with impunity. To many a married woman, to many a lovely maiden, the night has been fraught with a peril which is only increased when, jaded and exhausted, she enters the carriage to ride to her home, perhaps in the company of a passing acquaintance, a comparative stranger. Many will be fortunate enough and have strength of mind enough, to escape this peril and the dire consequences which it

threatens ; but it will be strange indeed if, in future years, some beautiful damsel or some fashionable married lady, does not look back with remorse and sorrow upon this brilliant ball as the cause of all her troubles ; as the origin of the broken marriage vow, or the fatal step which has blighted her life and wrecked her soul.

The gay and festive dancers have turned night into day ; the penalty is paid. The young man goes to his business after the night's revel, in an unhappy frame of mind. His head, instead of being clear and cool, as it should be, is disordered, confused, and racked with pain. He performs his duties mechanically, and where it is possible slights and ignores them. He is of little benefit to himself or his employer ; for his mind is filled with recollections of the night's amusements, and anticipations of the next affair of the kind. The wife who has shone at the ball, passes much of the day in her bed, neglecting the duties of the household ; the young mother is unable to bestow upon her children that care and attention which should

be her pleasure, as well as her duty ; and the fair maiden, tired and exhausted with the excesses of the preceding night, is unable to employ her mind or body in any useful occupation, or to cultivate those accomplishments and develop those practical faculties which would qualify her to become in the future a true wife and mother.

Before the exhaustion consequent upon one of these affairs has worn off, active preparations are in progress for another. The next hostess is exhausting every effort to outrival the gorgeous display and lavish hospitality of the last one. The minds of the ladies are entirely engrossed, to the exclusion of their home duties, and to the neglect of their families, with thoughts of the dresses to be worn.

And so the fashionable world passes the "season." The duties of religion, the claims of charity, the demands of home are passed by ; and the gay butterflies of fashion think only of their amusements and their dissipations. Libertines and seducers are welcome guests at all of these fashionable affairs ; and there they are

thus thrown into the company of pure young women and respectable young married ladies whose ruin they often achieve.

What I have written has been solely regarding the fashionable ball, the chosen amusement of what are called "our best circles." If so much of evil is associated with the dance among these surroundings, in the parlors of our leading dignitaries, bankers, politicians, merchants, lawyers, manufacturers—many of them members of our churches—where the restrictions supposed to be fixed by the laws of social etiquette govern largely, what of the dance at the public ball, where all of these surroundings are lacking, where all classes of society are welcome and where all who can purchase a ticket can gain admittance? If wives and daughters of prominent and wealthy men can charge their downfall to the account of the fashionable ball; if the origin of many divorce trials and sensational scandals can be traced to the elegant private parties; pray how many women can date their ruin from the public ball? How

many fallen women can truthfully say to-day that but for dancing they would now be pure and happy, instead of the vile, homeless, friendless outcasts that they are? Can the reader name a single agency which has caused the ruin of so many women as the dance? And yet it is the standard amusement of society. The dancing master is supported and encouraged by professors of religion, by the leading men in our churches, by those who should be the moral guides and censors of the communities in which they live. The "professor of the Terpsichorean art" is taken to the houses of our best citizens, and little boys and girls are placed in his charge. Dancing is indulged in openly by members of some of our Protestant churches, and no attempt is made to enforce the rules of those churches which forbid this amusement as degrading and sinful.

Some years ago there came under my personal observation a very sad case, in which a beautiful young woman lost her home, her happiness, her health, and finally her life, all as the results of attendance upon one public

ball. She was young, beautiful and attractive; the daughter of wealthy parents, who were active members of a leading church. Marie—for that was her name—was the very picture of loveliness and the personification of purity and innocence. She was an only child and the petted idol of her parents, who indulged her in everything that to them seemed proper. Upon her first entrance into society she attended several private parties at which dancing was a prominent feature. She was fascinated with the pastime and begged her parents to provide her with a teacher, that she might become proficient in the art. Her father, who had been stoutly opposed to dancing, was finally persuaded that there could be no harm in it in a private parlor and in good company, while he regarded attendance upon a public ball as exceedingly sinful. So he yielded to Marie's earnest request and engaged a dancing teacher for her. Marie, *petite*, graceful, sylph-like, proved an apt scholar, and after a few lessons enjoyed the distinction of being the best lady waltzer in the city. A

young people's club was formed and Marie was its brightest ornament. She was a regular attendant upon its frequent hops, and displayed her new accomplishment to the admiration of all. Finally the club disbanded, and for a time Marie could find no opportunity to indulge in her favorite pastime. Then a public ball was announced, and many of Marie's old club friends declared their intention of attending it. Marie, of course, received an invitation, and was full of anxiety to go. Knowing her father's antipathy to balls, she hesitated a long time before asking his permission to go ; but as the event drew near she finally mustered up the necessary courage and made the appeal to her father, who had never yet refused her any thing she asked. The father was of course startled when his daughter asked him for permission to attend a public ball, as he had always strongly condemned such affairs.

“ Why, Marie, my dear,” said he, “ what in the world put such an idea as that into your head ? ”

“ Well, father, I love to dance so well, and

so many nice people are going that I am sure it will be no harm. Most all the members of our old club are going, and some of them are real good church people, you know. Now, please, papa, do let your little Marie go, that is a real, good, dear, papa."

The father's judgment and his conscience told him that he ought not to allow his daughter, who was young, inexperienced and susceptible, to attend a ball where she would have to mingle with people whom she had never known, and where she would doubtless be thrown under influences to which she had hitherto been a stranger. But the father's heart was tender, and he could not long resist the earnest appeals made by Marie, who seemed bent upon attending the ball. So he finally told her to ask him no more, and referred her to the mother.

Marie's face was radiant with hope when she bounded into her mother's room and gaily shouted :

"Mother, I'm going to the ball to-night at Arlington Hall."

“ Why, my dear daughter, what are you thinking of. Don’t you know that it is going to be a public ball ? ”

“ Yes, ma ; but the nicest people in the city will be there, and it’s just going to be a splendid affair.”

“ Well, Marie, what does your papa think about it ? ”

“ Why, mother, he said to come to you.”

The mother was greatly shocked at the idea of allowing Marie to go to a public ball. Marie insisted that there was no more harm in it than in going to a club party. The mother neither refused nor assented, but Marie, having “ broken the ice,” went on with her preparations, well satisfied that her indulgent parents would yield at the last moment.

Before the appointed hour arrived, father and mother held an anxious consultation, and decided that it would be wrong for Marie to go, and that they would not allow her to do so. But when Marie stepped into the parlor she looked lovelier than they had ever seen her. Her cheeks were flushed with excitement, her

eyes fairly danced with pleasurable anticipation, and she looked so radiant and charming as she advanced to kiss her parents good-bye, that their hearts sank within them at the thought of refusing her the desired boon. Finally papa summoned enough courage to tell Marie that she must not attend the ball. A dark cloud of disappointment settled upon Marie's face and she burst into tears. Her parents had never refused her any thing before, and when Marie wept papa relented. and induced the mother to reluctantly consent to her attendance.

In a few moments more Marie was on her way to the ball with one of her old club associates. She had been allowed to go, against the conscientious scruples of both parents, who had finally yielded their better judgments to mistaken indulgence of their loved one. Both of them felt nervous and uneasy when Marie left their presence to attend, for the first time in her life, a public ball. Both felt that no good could result from it, but that much evil might come. They felt that Marie might be

thrown into the company of people whom it would be wrong for her to associate with, and whose influence would be bad. And so, indeed, it proved in this case, as it has in so many thousands of others.

Marie found Arlington Hall in a blaze of glory. It was brilliantly lighted and handsomely decorated ; filled with showily dressed women and fashionably attired men. The orchestra was pouring forth a great volume of inspiring music, to which Marie's tiny feet involuntarily beat time. She was completely dazzled by the scene, so new to her maiden eyes. Around her she saw a few of the "leading citizens," but most of the guests she had never seen before, although she had lived in the little city from her birth.

When Marie entered the ball her rare beauty and graceful carriage called out many admiring glances, and she was soon the center of attraction. Her perfect dancing was much admired, and, in fact, Marie was the belle of the evening, the sensation of the hour. All classes of society were represented at the ball, as is always

the case. The "sporting men" and saloon keepers were out in force, and there made the acquaintance of ladies and young girls whom they could never have met at any other time or place. It was Marie's fate to meet one of this class; a gambler, who sought and obtained an introduction to her. In a few moments she was waltzing with him, little knowing that she was on the floor locked in the arms of a professional gambler.

Like the majority of his class, George B—— was a dashing, attractive fellow. Gamblers make it a point to cultivate their personal appearance and manners to the utmost and to dress in the extreme of fashion. They usually have a gentle and winning address and a sweet, pathetic story to pour into the ears of any young girl whom they can induce to listen to them. Nearly every professional gambler prides himself upon these acquisitions as a portion of his capital. One great object of his life is the ruin and betrayal of young girls, and in order to accomplish this he cultivates every accomplishment and grace which he



THE INTRODUCTION.

thinks will aid him in fascinating susceptible maidens. Hence it is that gamblers are more dangerous persons for young ladies to meet than any other class of men.

After Marie's waltz with her new acquaintance a pleasant chat followed. He did his utmost to make an impression upon her virgin mind. He was with her most of the evening, and before parting from her had so won upon her affections that when he pressed her hand warmly and whispered in her ear that he loved her, it sent a thrill of pleasure through her entire being. Marie's cheek was flushed and her eye flashed, and when she left the ball it was with a promise to meet George on the following evening.

It was hardly necessary for George to warn Marie against telling her parents. She felt that she was doing wrong, but that she was powerless to help it. The stranger's face was ever before her; his tender words kept ringing in her ears; it all seemed like a dream. The gambler had played his part to perfection, and Marie was in the toils.

On the following evening Marie told father and mother her first falsehood, and leaving the house, ostensibly to spend the evening with a young lady friend, was soon driving with her new acquaintance. He improved the opportunity to the utmost; declared to Marie his passionate love for her; told how he had wandered all over the world looking for some woman to be the mistress of his heart, but had never found *the* one before; told her that if she refused him, his life would be a black and dismal one until death.

Marie's senses were bewildered. She had never listened to such words before, and her youth and inexperience rendered her unable to resist the impassioned appeals of her companion. She exclaimed :

“ Why, George, do you mean that? Am I really to be your wife? Papa and mamma will never consent. I can never ask them.”

“ Marie, you must be mine. I can not live without you. Marry me, with your father's consent if he will give it. If he loves you, as you say, he will not refuse. But if he should

refuse, we will wed without his consent, and then he will relent and bless us both. Marie, while there is life in this body and strength in this right arm, I will protect, cherish and care for you as devotedly and tenderly as a mother for her babe."

When Marie returned home that night she had promised George to be his wife. But her heart was sorely troubled, because she felt that her parents would not consent, and that if she would wed George she must do so in violation of their command. Her mind was, however, fully made up. The gambler had played his cards skillfully. Marie's heart was completely his. After a sleepless night Marie said to her mother :

"Mamma, how would you like to part with your girl?"

"What do you mean, my child?"

"Why, mamma," said Marie, blushing, "I am in love."

"Why, my dear girl, you are but seventeen years old. And, pray tell me, with whom are you in love?"

“ Why, mamma, with just the loveliest gentleman you ever saw. I met him at the Arlington, the night of the ball.”

“ What is his name ? ”

“ George B—.”

“ What is his business ? ”

“ I did not ask him. But he is so handsome, and so gallant, and so gentlemanly, that I know you must like him.”

It was with many doubts and misgivings that the mother heard this confession, and it was with a heavy heart that she told her husband what their loved one had said. His surprise can be imagined. He had never heard of the man who had stolen Marie’s affection, and had serious doubts as to his respectability. The directory gave no clue to him, and no business man of whom he inquired seemed to know anything of the person. Finally the father made inquiry at the hotels, and at the best one in the city was told that Mr. B. was their guest, and had been for about six weeks.

“ What is his occupation, sir ? ” asked the father, of the hotel clerk.

“Well, sir, he is a ‘gentleman of leisure,’ or, as some would call him, a professional gambler.”

This but confirmed the father’s worst suspicions. Hastening home in a state of excitement and indignation, he sternly called Marie to him.

Marie trembled when her father, for the first time in his life, spoke harshly to her. When she stood before him, she was in tears, and her agitation increased as he began speaking.

“Marie, my daughter, you have filled my heart with sorrow, and your mother is almost frantic with grief. The man with whom you are in love is a professional gambler, an outlaw; a man whom no respectable person should speak to. And is my daughter, the pride of my heart, the cherished idol of my old age, the one upon whom I have lavished so much care and tenderness, is she to break her parents’ hearts and ruin her own happiness for life by her affection for a miserable, worthless gambler?”

“Father,” replied Marie, sobbing, “you

must be mistaken. George B—— is no gambler. He is the most perfect gentleman I ever knew, and much as I love you and mamma, I love him so much, and have so much confidence in him, that I would follow him to the end of the earth."

"Enough, Marie, enough. I now forbid you to ever see or speak to him again. I shall see him myself and settle this matter promptly."

For the first time in his life the father was angry with his daughter. It was not without bitter self-reproaches that he reflected:

"This is the result of allowing Marie to attend a public ball. My conscience told me she ought not to go, but I had not the firmness and resolution to say no, and behold the consequences."

Pursuing these uncomfortable reflections, the anxious father hastened to the hotel to see the man who was trying to steal his daughter from him.

At the office of the hotel he was introduced to the gambler, whom he found to be, in out-

ward appearance, a gentleman, just as Marie had described him.

“Sir,” said the old gentleman, in a harsh voice, “I should like to see you in private for a few moments.”

“With the greatest of pleasure,” responded the gambler with the utmost ease and self-possession, which fairly took the father’s breath away. However the latter said, in an angry tone of voice :

“Mr. B——, you have met my daughter.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Although an entire stranger, you have talked to her of love, without asking my permission. Sir, I allow no man to do that.”

“I have said nothing to her unbecoming a gentleman.”

“Well, sir, my daughter is but a mere school girl, and your course toward her has been anything but that of a gentleman. No stranger should presume as you have done.”

“Of course I am a stranger, but I could not help it if your charming daughter captured my affections. I have traveled all over the

world, and never before have I seen a woman who so strongly impressed me. I am very glad, sir, to enjoy the pleasure of this interview, as I was about to call upon you and ask you for the hand of your daughter."

The impudence, coolness and assurance of the gambler somewhat startled the staid father, who had never come in contact with a sporting man before. But in a tone of just indignation he forbade the smooth-tongued rascal from ever speaking to the girl, and returned to his home, thinking that Marie would never see the stranger again and that she would in time forget him.

Of course the gambler, with his knowledge of human nature, realized that the father would never consent to his marriage with Marie, but he also realized that Marie, girl-like, would be rendered only more determined by the opposition of her parents.

The next night, according to previous arrangement, George and Marie had another meeting. Marie's mind was in a terrible state of agitation. Both of her parents had told



THE STOLEN INTERVIEW.

her never to speak to this man, and declared that if she married him she should never cross the threshold of home again, or ever be recognized as their daughter. But she loved the gambler with all the intensity and depth of her ardent, passionate nature, and he knew it. Hence he appealed to her in honeyed words and the most impassioned language to brave the displeasure of her parents and marry him. The poor girl hesitated long between the love she bore her home and her father and mother, who had indulged her from childhood, and the affection she felt for this "gay fellow" she had met at the ball. Her better self said to her: "Can I trust myself with this man, whom I have known but a few days, and forsake father and mother and home and all my old associates?"

"But," he urged, "after marriage your parents who love you so dearly will relent and forgive us both. Then we will all dwell together in peace and happiness, and the little cloud which now shuts out the sunshine will have passed away."

“But, George, if my parents do not relent, and if all my old associates refuse me recognition, what can I do ?”

“Why, darling, I will stand between you and all harm ; I will toil and labor for you so long as life and health lasts ; I will take the place of father and mother, be ever at your side to soothe and comfort you, smile when you smile, and weep when you weep ; be all in all you, until death does part us.”

These burning words overcame all of Marie’s scruples and qualms.

“George, I can not doubt you. If you are willing to make such sacrifices I can do no less. I will be your wife, and then papa and mamma must forgive me, and learn to love you as I do.”

“Then go with me to-night, and we will be married.”

“What ! to-night, George ! ”

“Yes, to-night. If we delay something may come between us and our happiness.”

Marie at last gave the fatal consent, and drove with the gambler to a neighboring town,

where they were married. At a late hour they returned to the hotel. The father, frantic with grief, had missed his daughter, and had spent the night in a vain search for her. He could find no trace of the gambler, and well he knew that they were together. Returning home he told his heart-broken wife that Marie had gone away with the gambler, and they bitterly reproached themselves for having ever allowed her to attend the public ball, where she met the bad man who had stolen her from them. But Marie, they said, had chosen her lot. She had disobeyed them, had left her pleasant home with a man who was unworthy of her, and had disgraced herself and them by marrying an outlaw. Henceforward she was no daughter of theirs. Never more should she enter the once happy home she had abandoned. She had sown the wind, she must reap the whirlwind.

On the morning following the ill-starred marriage, Marie went to her father's house with her husband, told what had occurred, and pleaded for forgiveness. But the father was

obdurate, and he told his daughter and her husband to leave the house instantly, and never, never dare to show their faces there again. This the groom had expected, but Marie could hardly realize that it was her father who spoke those harsh, cruel words. Slowly and sadly she turned to leave, for ever, the house in which she was born ; where she had spent so many happy hours in childhood and in youth ; where her life had been showered with kindness by a father's indulgence and a mother's love.

After returning to the hotel she for the first time comprehended her position, and understood what a fearful step she had taken. She burst into tears and reproached herself bitterly. But she consoled herself with the thought that nothing could take George from her ; that she loved him more dearly than any one else on earth, and that he would keep his solemn promise and protect her from all harm. He comforted her by reiterating these promises, and by predicting that in a short time her parents would relent and wel-

come her back to their hearts as in former days. Marie found herself ostracised completely, not only debarred from her home, but shunned and avoided by her old companions, who passed her on the street without a single token of recognition. "Well," she thought, "let them all forsake me, I can still lean upon the strong right arm that George has so often told me of. He will shield and protect me from all the troubles and trials of the world. He will never leave me, for he told me so, and I believe him."

Poor Marie had yet to realize that she had given herself to a cold, heartless man, who had married her only to gain possession of her father's estate, which was a large one, and she was an only daughter. But only a few weeks had passed by, when the sad truth was made known to her, and she was brought face to face with the consequences of her mistake. One day she overheard the landlord of the hotel say to her husband:

"Mr. B——, the bill must be paid to-day, or you must go elsewhere."

A moment later George entered her room, pale and greatly agitated.

“What is the matter, George? What did the landlord mean when he told you the bill must be paid to-day? You look so pale and seem so much troubled; tell Marie, won’t you, George?”

“Well, I suppose I might as well tell you all now as at any other time. You must know the truth any how, sooner or later. I have no money and can not pay my hotel bill. The landlord says I must pay the bill, or leave the house to-day. I expected to get help from your father, but brute as he is—”

“Stop, George. Not one word against *him*. He is my father, and has been good and kind to me. I will not hear him abused. Don’t say another word, and I will go to him and see what I can do.”

Marie wrote her father a note begging permission to come and see him, but received no reply. Then she mustered up courage enough to go to her old home for the first time since she had been ordered to leave, never to return.

She rang the bell, and her father came to the door.

“Father,” said the poor girl, “I want to talk to you.”

“Marie,” he replied, “did I not tell you never to darken my door again? How dare you show your face here again after disgracing us in the way you have done? Now you must leave the house forever.”

And with these words the father closed the door in the face of his unhappy child.

Poor Marie returned broken-hearted to the hotel, where her husband was anxiously awaiting her arrival.

“Well, what success?” he eagerly asked.

“My father would not listen to me. He turned me away and told me never to return again.”

“What did I tell you? I knew he was a brute.”

“George, never apply that word to him again. But what shall we, what can we do?”

“Well, to-day we must leave the hotel.

Where we shall go I do not know, but I will try and find some place."

That afternoon George and Marie left the hotel and went to a cheap boarding house on a back street, where Marie was more lonely and unhappy than ever. Her trunks and clothes had been retained by the landlord of the hotel. She was unable to dress herself decently, and she passed many weary days and nights in her dismal little room, cut off from all human companionship and sympathy. Her husband began to neglect her and treat her with indifference and cruelty. He remained away until late at night, and finally stayed all night, while poor Marie stood at the window, anxiously awaiting his return.

The first time that he had spent the night away from her, Marie said to him upon his return:

"George, where have you been? What is wrong? I have been waiting for you all night."

"Well," said he, "you will have to wait for me many nights in the future. I have to do

something to support you, as that old father of yours won't do a thing to help you."

"George, is this the 'strong right arm' I was to lean upon? Are you the man that said I should be cared for and loved and cherished while there was life in your body, if I would desert father and mother and home and friends for you? George, I have sacrificed every thing for you that made life dear to me. I have made myself an outcast from society. I have met only sneers and scoffs from those who were once my dearest associates. I have felt the finger of scorn pointed at me as I passed along the street. I have been lonely, without any companions or any friends to cheer my drooping spirits. God only knows what I have suffered, and it was all for you, George. If I have sinned, richly have I paid the penalty."

"Well," replied he, heartlessly, "there is some consolation for you. You are not the first girl who has been deceived. You should have had better sense than to believe every thing a stranger would tell you. Certainly

your relatives and friends could not have thought as much of you as they pretended, or they would not have all deserted you."

These cold, cruel words seemed to Marie to sound her death knell. The man for whom she had sacrificed all, for whom she had given up parents and home and friends, now heartlessly turned his back upon her and actually had the audacity to upbraid her for her folly. Poor Marie was on the verge of despair, for her life became more sad and gloomy every day. She was cast off by every body, and there was no human being to whom she could tell her sorrows, no human heart to which she could appeal for sympathy. Night after night she sat by her window waiting for her husband's return, but he would not come until morn, and then he would tell her that he had to play cards to support her.

Marie finally found herself in a condition of absolute destitution. Her husband failed to provide her with the necessaries of life. She needed food and fuel and clothing, and in her penury she determined to appeal once more to

the home from which she had been driven an outcast.

She wrote a letter to the mother, a pathetic letter, telling how she suffered, begging forgiveness for the past and praying for permission to return to the parental roof. Such a letter, it would seem, would melt a heart of stone, and it did touch the mother, but she would not allow herself to relent, fearing the verdict of society if the daughter who had disgraced the family name should be received again into her parents' affections. When the mother gave the letter to the father and he read it, he was deeply touched and said :

“ Mother, what shall we do.”

“ Well, Marie has made her bed, let her lie in it.”

“ But she may be suffering as she says.”

“ I expect she is. But why did she disgrace herself and us as she has done. Let her remain where she is. She will never return to this house with my consent.”

This settled poor Marie's doom, and she felt that there was no longer any use of ap-

pealing for aid from home. Her husband treated her daily with more contempt and cruelty. She passed her nights all alone, and her days were without a ray of sunshine. In spite of all this neglect and heartlessness, in spite of the broken promises and violated pledges, in spite of the suffering and sorrow which this man had brought upon her, Marie loved him yet, and would have borne all patiently if he had but given her any proof of his affection.

Finally Marie was tossing upon a bed of pain and fever. She felt the delirium approaching and her brain reeling.

“George,” she pleaded, “if ever you loved me, stay at home to-night. I am very, very ill, and am afraid to stay alone.”

The fascinations of a gambler’s life are such that he will sacrifice any thing to enjoy them. And so George had important business down town, and he left his suffering wife in the care of a little girl, “Dot,” and hastened to the gambling-room.

Little Dot attended to Marie’s wants as

best she could, and poor Marie became much attached to her, as she was the only companion and associate she had had for many a weary day and night. The poor young woman, whose life had been so cruelly blasted, tossed about on her bed of pain and anguish. The delirium was in her brain, and her feverish fancies summoned before her visions of the past, as clear and distinct as reality itself. Now she was a little girl, playing about the beautiful old home, walking with mother's hand in hers, gathering beautiful flowers. Again she was a merry school girl, kissing papa and mamma good bye, and tripping off happily to school with other little companions, as heedless, and thoughtless, and gay as she. Then she was an innocent young maiden, developing gradually the charms of womanhood, entering into society, attending club parties, and learning to dance. And then she was asking father and mother for permission to attend the public ball, and was forcing their unwilling consent by her plaintive pleading. And then she was being introduced to George, and was waltzing

with him, and he was telling her how deeply he loved her, and how he would protect her and cherish her in sickness and in health, until death should part them. Marie would start wildly from her bed, as, in her delirium, she lived through these scenes of her past life. "George, you do love me," she would repeat, over and over again, in her fever. "Give me your hand, George," she would cry, and little Dot would seize the thin, wasted hand of the poor, suffering Marie. And the fever-stricken woman would cover her face with her hands, as if to shut out some repulsive picture from her gaze, and fairly scream: "Oh, father, mother, forgive me! Don't say those cruel words, don't drive me from you!" And when exhausted nature would assert itself and Marie would fall into a troubled sleep, her rest would be brief; the delirium would come again, and the unhappy girl would live over and over the scenes of her past life.

George was gambling while Marie was dying. It was nearly morning when he returned home and Marie said to him:

“Oh, George, I am so glad you have come. I am very, very sick, and I need a physician and some medicine. Won’t you get them for me, George ?”

“You almost set me crazy with your wants and complaints. Your expenses are too much. I am not made of money. Why don’t you send to your father for what you need ? You know how *good* and *kind* he has always been to you ; he will help you.”

“George, say no more,” said Marie, in a feeble, trembling voice ; “I shall not trouble you long ; I am suffering, but I deserve it all. How foolish in me to leave my home and parents and become an outcast, hated and despised by all. And then to be abandoned by the man who swore to love and protect me until death ! Yes, yes ; I deserve all my trouble. But I feel that the end is not far off. I will not be with you long, George ; can’t you smooth my pathway to the grave ?”

“O, you are always complaining ; I don’t think you are in any danger. You should not

have believed a silly love tale told you by a stranger."

"Yes, George, I know I was young and ignorant. But I haven't long to live, and if you leave me I know not what I shall do."

"Well, I am tired and sleepy now, and you must not bother me any more. If you are not better in the morning I will see what can be done."

With these words the selfish, brutal husband retired, and in a few moments was soundly sleeping. The rest of the night was full of suffering and misery for Marie, who determined to make one last request of her parents: to be allowed to go home to die.

On the following morning the gambler left without saying one word to his victim, and becoming engrossed in a game did not return. Marie sent little Dot to her father's house with a message that she was sick and suffering, and wanted to be taken home. The mother sent back a stern refusal. This crushed the last hope in Marie's heart, and helped to hasten the grim messenger of death, which had for hours

been hovering about the thin and wasted form of the wronged and suffering girl.

The delirium came again, and through another long day the panorama of her past life was spread out before Marie's feverish gaze. Ever and anon Marie would call for "George," and "Papa," and "Mamma," but they came not, and when she would return to consciousness she would pray, O! so earnestly, for death to come and take her from this wicked world, this world of wretchedness and woe.

When night came Marie felt that her life was ebbing fast away. She sent little Dot to tell her parents that she was dying, and ask them to come and grant her forgiveness before she entered the dark valley, but the door was closed in Dot's face, and the message was not received. Dot returned with a heavy heart and told her mistress what had occurred. Poor Marie gasped: "Well, all is over. Stay close by me, Dot, and hold my hand. I forgive you, George, and papa and mamma, and may God forgive me."

And Marie was dead. Little Dot tenderly

smoothed the raven hair over the pale, cold forehead; she crossed the thin, wasted hands reverently over the bosom. No husband, no father, no mother had been present to smooth the pathway to the tomb for the dying girl; no one but little Dot was there to perform the last sad offices of affection for the inanimate dead.

At midnight Marie died, and little Dot sat faithfully by the cold corpse until daylight, when the murderer came into the room.

“What, dead!” the wretched man exclaimed, as he stood transfixed with horror at the sight before him.

“Yes, dead,” said little Dot; “and her last words were ‘George, I forgive you.’”

“My God! what have I done?” screamed the gambler, as some faint conception of his terrible crime entered his mind. “Marie is dead, and I murdered her. And with her dying words she forgave me.”

Even this gambler’s heart of stone was melted and his callous conscience was filled with remorse as he leaned down and tenderly



THE DEATH OF MARIE.



kissed the pale lips of her whose life he had wrecked.

"I loved her," gasped he, "and yet I have killed her. What have I done? What have I done?"

The news spread rapidly over the city that Marie B——, who but two years before had been the prettiest, happiest, loveliest girl in the city, but who had eloped with a gambler and been disowned by her family, was dead. The father and mother, who had set their hearts like flint against the poor girl while she lived, who had refused to relieve her sufferings or listen to her appeals for forgiveness, claimed the body and gave it a Christian burial. The remains were taken to that parlor from which, but two short years before, Marie was taken, radiant, blooming and charming, to the public ball which had blighted her life and driven her down to a premature grave. The old schoolmates and associates who had left Marie, living, to her fate, flocked to see her remains. They ornamented her cold, dead body with flowers; they kissed the mute lips, which could never

more make response ; they spoke words of love and tenderness concerning the dead girl, which would have been priceless to her if uttered when she lived and suffered.

And all that was mortal of Marie B—— was borne to the grave. And thus was buried another victim of the public ball, another dupe of the heartless gambler, another sacrifice to the demands of society.

I have told this story in its minutest details for several reasons. In the first place, every word, even to the slightest incident, is true. In the next place, there is scarcely any portion of it which is not fraught with a deep moral import. There are thousands of such cases as that of poor Marie B—— ; thousands of such victims are immolated annually upon the altar of the dance ; thousands of such dupes are made every year by gamblers and adventurers such as George B——.

Society adopted the dance as its standard amusement, and Marie would have been spared her horrible fate had she never been brought under its fascinating spell.

Society sanctioned the action of her father and mother in providing a dancing master for her. Society justified the public ball, and regarded the attendance of Marie as perfectly proper. And yet, when the poor girl succumbed to the temptations which society had thrown about her, society turned her away, society made her an outcast, society compelled her father and mother to drive her from her home and tear her image from their hearts. And when the poor girl, abandoned, betrayed and persecuted, had been driven to her death, society gathered about the corpse and shed hypocritical tears over Marie's sad fate.

Not all fathers or mothers would be so relentless in their treatment of an erring daughter as were Marie B.'s parents. But there are very many such, and my belief is that unless they repent, in sackcloth and ashes, they will spend their eternity in everlasting blackness and darkness, while the spirit of poor Marie, refined and purified by suffering, chastened by much sorrow, will shine out with the lustre of

a redeemed soul over the transom of Heaven's door.

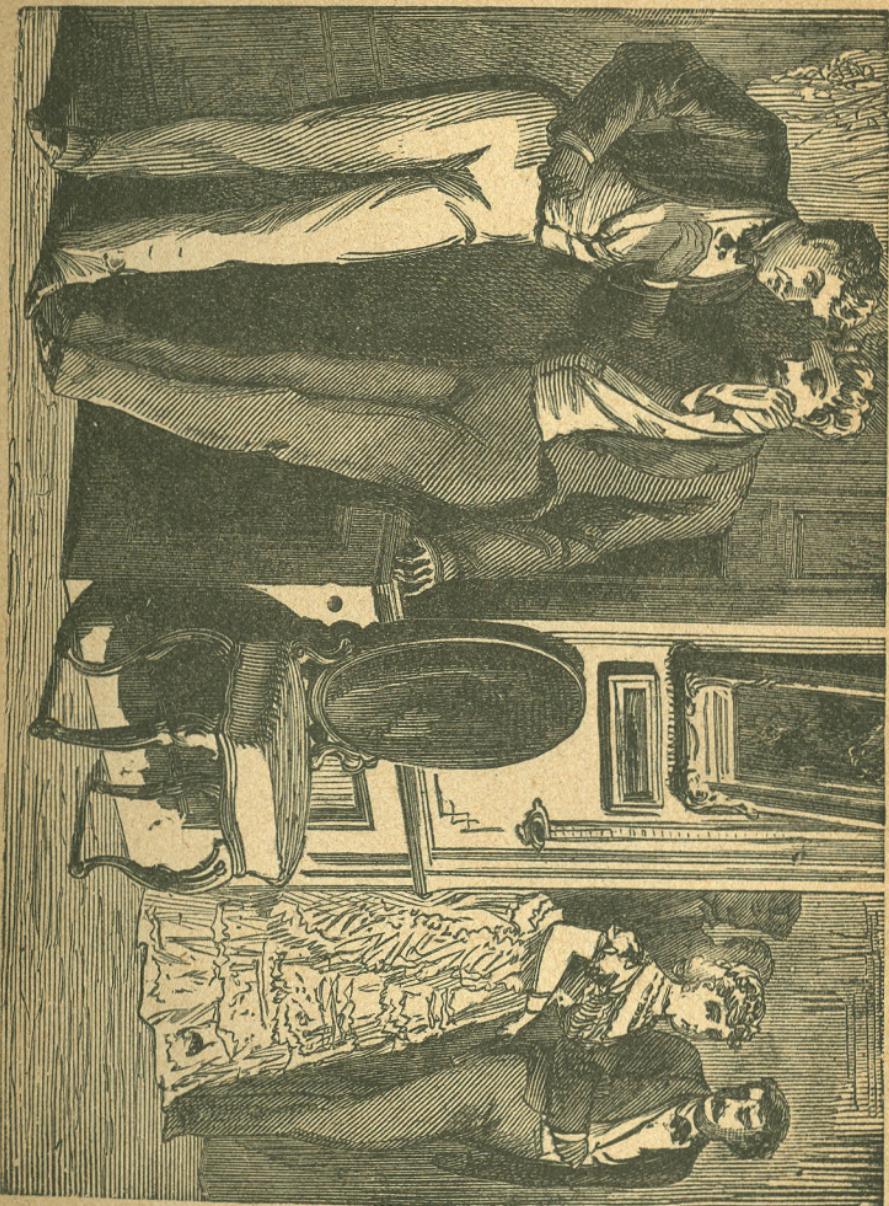
The dance is every year making thousands of victims whose fate is even worse than Marie's. They are driven into lives of shame, and date their ruin from their attendance upon the public ball. The gamblers who frequent such affairs are the most dangerous men that any woman can meet. They make the betrayal of unsuspecting, innocent girls the serious study, the most important business of their lives. Their love stories, told so often, repeated so frequently, are so plausible that through them they often win the hearts and work the ruin even of those who have had much social experience and possess great knowledge of the world. Such being the fact, what chance has an innocent, unsuspecting girl of sixteen to protect herself against their designs? And yet society, by encouraging, or even tolerating public balls, and sanctioning the attendance of respectable people, gives these desperate men opportunities to make victims which they would not otherwise pos-

sess. And when these victims are entrapped, society drives them forth and closes its doors forever against them.

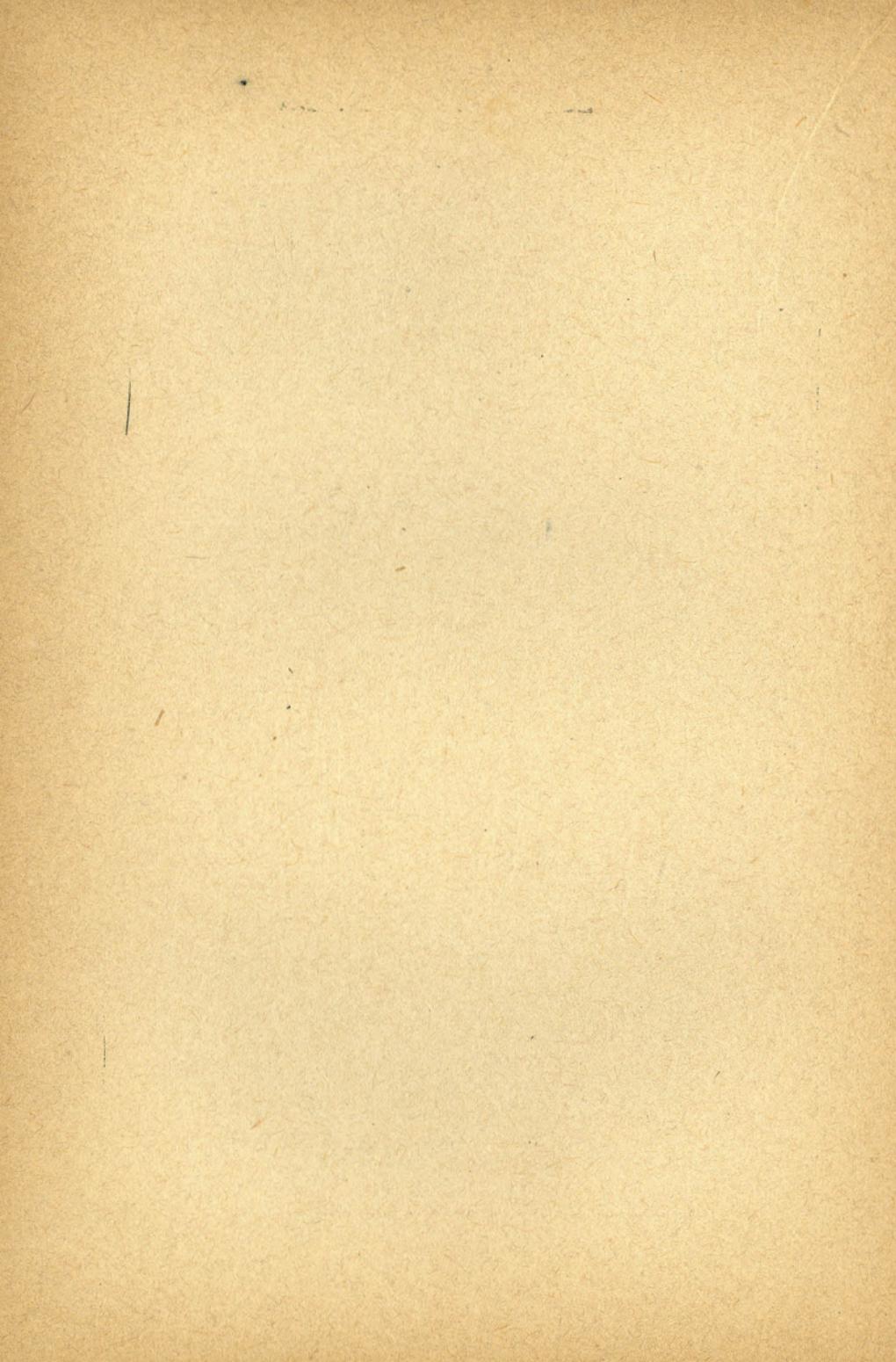
The Church should turn its face like flint against the dance as an amusement. Its influence is evil and nothing but evil. "Thousands of women dance," you say, "and are no worse for it." But is that so? Thousands of men drink who do not die drunkards, but can you say they are no worse for drinking? Is there any man who is made better by drinking? And did you ever know of a woman or a young girl to be benefited by dancing? Because every woman who dances does not become a gambler's wife or a prostitute it must not be inferred that she has not been injured by her indulgence in this amusement. She has, perhaps, been injured in health, because dancers turn night into day, and that is a violation of nature's laws for which there is always a physical penalty. She has, perhaps, neglected her husband and her family and ignored the duties of her household by reason of her passion for the dance. She has certainly spent

many hours in the company of gay, worldly, thoughtless people, whose motto is "eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow ye die." As one can not touch pitch without being defiled, so a pure innocent person can not be brought into contact with gay, reckless men and women of the world, without suffering more or less contamination, perhaps unconsciously to themselves, by the association. She has found her moral tone lowered, and her ideas of the duties and responsibilities of life corrupted by participation in the social dance. She has given to the dance many precious hours, which if devoted to religion, or charity, or literature, would have benefited others as well as herself. So, reader, I do not think it can be truthfully said that any person ever made a practice of dancing who was not injured, to a greater or less extent, in consequence.

The young person who reads these pages may agree with me as to the evils resulting from public balls and fashionable private parties, but declare that no harm can possibly come from the social given by the club, in



WAITING FOR THEIR VICTIMS.



which but a select few participate. They go early and return home early, and the young reader will skeptically ask if I believe that at such affairs any lady takes a step which could result in her ruin? I can answer very briefly this question. In itself I presume, there is little or no harm in the club dance. But how many young people stop with the club dance? How many there become fascinated by the amusement which appears so harmless to them, and the love for which finally leads them to attend the fashionable party or the public ball? Marie herself was taught to look with horror upon the public ball, and when she attended the first hop little did she imagine that she would ever think of going to a ball. But in a very short time she was so anxious to go that she, by persistent pleading, forced a reluctant consent from her parents. She went to the ball, and the results have been stated. Therefore, the objection to the private hop is that it causes a love of dancing, and leads to indulgence in the amusement under circumstances and amidst surroundings which

can hardly fail to result in evil to the participant.

It is a well known fact that in our cities and large towns the ball room is the recruiting office for prostitution. Balls are given every night, and many thoughtless young women are induced to attend, "just for fun." They are mostly those in the humbler walks of life, the daughters of small tradesmen, of mechanics, of clerks, of laborers. Not one in a hundred of the girls who consent to attend these balls preserves her purity. They meet the most desperate characters, the professional criminals, the gamblers, the murderer, the lowest *debauchees*. They are thrown into the company of vile women, who picture to them the ease and luxury of a harlot's life, and offer them all manner of temptations to abandon the paths of virtue. They meet with men who tell them all kinds of plausible stories, and work their ruin by various means, not seldom by violence or the use of drugs. The columns of the New York newspapers contain many sad stories of the girls who have been dragged to

their ruin by attending the dances at the Buckingham and Cremorne Gardens in that city. It is a shame and a disgrace that the authorities allow such dens of iniquity to remain in existence: and yet society wonders at the increase of prostitution!

CHAPTER IV.

A LOST WOMAN SAVED THROUGH HER MOTHER'S LOVE—HOW A GIRL WAS SNATCHED FROM THE VERGE OF A PRECIPICE.

Since I began the composition of this book, there was related to me a touching story, by one who was acquainted with the facts as they occurred in real life, and which, in at least one of its features, affords a welcome and refreshing contrast with the story of poor Marie, which I told in the last chapter. This pathetic tale, as recited to me, was as follows:

Some years ago, a family of wealth, culture and refinement lived in the city of Philadelphia, and moved in the best social circles of the old Quaker metropolis. The parents were blessed with several beautiful children, who were reared amidst the most elevating and refining influences, and who grew up to be a

credit to themselves, an honor to their family, and universally recognized as bright and shining ornaments to the best society of the great city. Among the children was a daughter especially noted for her beauty, amiability and many accomplishments. These gifts rendered her a general favorite, and her parents lavished upon her all the tenderness and indulgence which she could crave.

Of course she had numerous admirers; such charming creatures always do. Among them was a young man of fine intellect and blameless reputation, who succeeded in winning her maiden affections, and who seemed to be most devotedly attached to her. She was betrothed to him, and during the period of the engagement, she was led, by her passionate love for him, his repeated and earnest entreaties, and her confidence in his solemn promises of early marriage, to surrender to his keeping that priceless jewel which is more valuable than life to a woman—her virtue. Ardent, loving, confiding, innocent, unsuspecting, she sacrificed her honor upon the altar of love, and

trusted, as so many thousands before her, only to be betrayed. The same old, sad story — forever being told and yet forever new — of youth and innocence slaughtered by the hands of lust, and a woman's loving heart pierced to the death by the dagger of unholy passion.

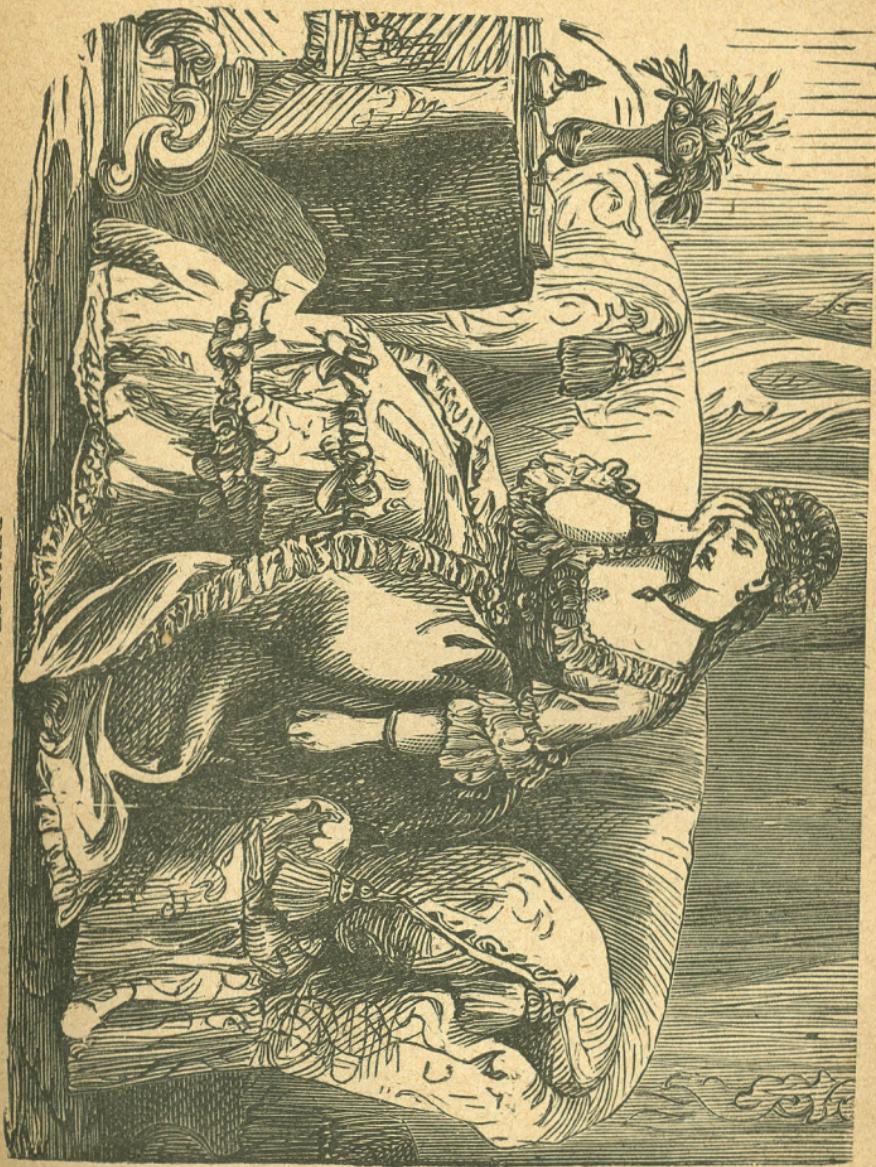
For a time her affianced husband was devoted, loving and tender; but ere long a dark, deep shadow fell across her pathway, and the consequences of her sin became apparent — consequences which would blast her good name, wreck her life and transmit the curse of her fall to an innocent being yet unborn. To her lover she hastened to tell her condition, and beg that he redeem his sacred pledge, and save her honor. He readily complied, and promised immediate marriage; but he failed to return to her at the appointed time, and she watched and waited in vain for his coming. Not a word of explanation or apology came to the desponding girl from the man who had so basely wronged her. She could hear nothing of him save that he had left the country for "parts unknown." The poor girl, despairing and

heart-broken, was almost crazed with the thought of the disgrace in which she had involved herself and the stain which she had cast upon the good name of her family. The torture which filled her mind when she realized her situation no brain can conceive, no pen can portray. Her own shame she might bear ; but that father and mother, sister and brother, and child unborn, should all suffer because, in an unguarded moment, she had sinned, seemed more than she could stand. She could not, dared not tell her terrible secret to those loved ones, and she therefore determined to go far away and suffer her shame and disgrace among strangers. So the poor erring girl left the home of her childhood and wandered out into the night.

It is unnecessary to enter into the details of her sad life, after leaving her happy home and going out into the cold, heartless world. Her story is the same as that of myriads of other poor girls who have been seduced, betrayed and deserted ; who have chosen rather to bear the consequences among strangers than

to be a witness to the anguish they have brought to their loved ones ; who have given birth to the children of their sins, far away from home and friends ; who, for the sake of their offspring, have tried to gain a livelihood by honest toil, but who have found no chance in all the world for the woman who has sinned ; who have finally succumbed in the unequal struggle, and, driven by want and poverty and despair, have entered the house of shame.

This is the story of this poor girl ; and she remained in the den of iniquity until the bloom had left her cheek, and the pallor of disease had settled upon it ; until Death had marked her for his prey, and the grave was fairly yawning to receive her. Homeless, friendless, the thoughts of the dying girl involuntarily turned to the happy abode which she had left in her misery and despair ; to that father and mother whom she had dishonored, and whom she had abandoned without one word of farewell, and oh ! how she longed to see them once more ere she should enter the dark valley ; to fall on her knees before that wronged father and beg his



forgiveness, and lay her aching head upon the bosom of that heart-broken mother and crave absolution.

The poor girl's mind was impressed with the idea that should she return to the home she had disgraced, she would meet with naught but frowns and curses, where once she revelled in love and affection; would be denied admission to the sacred precincts she had dishonored, and driven from the door with maledictions and imprecations. But there was no other place in all the world for her to go; and she shuddered at the idea of dying in the streets. She had been abandoned by all her old associates in sin, and there was no one to whom she could appeal for a word of sympathy or an act of kindness in her last hours, but that aged father and mother whom she so longed yet so dreaded to see once again in this world.

And so the dying girl started upon the long journey to her distant home. Her mind was filled with doubts and misgivings, and she trembled at the thought of meeting those she had so terribly disgraced. At times her fears

nearly overcame her, and she was almost ready to retrace her steps; but sickness and hunger, sin and suffering, had broken her down in spirit and body, and her intense desire to possess the poor privilege of dying in the old home impelled her to her destination.

She reached home about midnight, and at the threshold she hesitated, trembled, and paused. All was quiet; not a sound disturbed the awful stillness of the night. As the poor, wandering girl found herself amidst the familiar scenes of her happy childhood, and a flood of recollections of joyous years came into her mind, she heard a low, sweet voice in accents of devotion and tenderness, and peering through the open shutter, saw by the dim light of the half-extinguished lamp, the form of her aged mother on her knees. As the outcast bent her head to catch the sacred words issuing from the lips of that pious mother and ascending to the throne of grace, she discovered that *she—she*, the poor, wretched, sin-stained girl, the loathed and despised child of vice and shame — was the burden of the petition, the one subject

of the prayer. Oh! how that mother prayed that God would send her some tidings of that wandering daughter; that God would bring the erring one back to the arms that were waiting to receive, back to the home that was ready to shelter; that He would be with her and keep her, wherever she might be; that He would bring peace and happiness to her sin-stained soul, and bring her back to the fold of His creatures. That mother prayed as only a mother can pray for a lost child; but little did she realize how soon her prayer was to be answered, and the child whom she had never ceased to love, would be folded once more in her arms.

The wanderer's hand was on the knob; she turned it and the door readily opened to her touch. Stealthily and tremblingly she entered the old home, but once within its sacred precincts her emotions overcame her and she fell fainting to the floor. The mother, aroused by the noise, hastened to the spot. As she entered the room she saw the reclining form upon the floor, and asked:

“Who is there?”

“It is I, mother, your long lost daughter,” answered the girl, in accents broken by gasps and sobs, “come home to humbly crave your forgiveness and to die in your arms.”

The mother’s countenance assumed an expression of radiance as she realized that the answer had been sent to her many prayers, and the moment she had so long looked for and prayed for had come at last. As she gazed upon the wasted form, the hollow cheeks, the sunken eyes, of her erring daughter, the tears flowed down her aged face and her body quivered with emotion. She clasped the dying girl in her arms and murmured :

“My dear child, my long lost daughter, you are forgiven. Thank God, you have returned home at last. My child, all these years I have prayed, night and morning, for your coming. Never since the first moment you left us, has that door been closed. It has been ajar night and day, waiting for you to come. Though you may have sinned and fallen to the lowest depths, yet you are my daughter, and

the doors of my house are ever ajar for you, as my heart and my arms have ever been ready to receive you."

The mother hastened with the glad tidings of the lost one's return, to father and brother and sister, and all gathered about the poor wanderer and welcomed her home with many rejoicings. How different from the taunts, and curses and threats and revilings which she had feared!

The world frowned; society sneered; but that mother heeded them not. The lost was found; Laura was safe at home; the mother's heart was full of joy.

The daughter, made happy by the welcome she had received, and by the pardons and blessings which were showered upon her, felt that now she could die in peace. Soon she sought the bed from which she was never more to rise. A broken heart and a shattered constitution told the story of her sufferings as well as of her sins. But her last hours were soothed by the tender care and devoted affection of that loving mother, who prayed and

wept over her sick daughter ; and as she held the thin, wasted hand in hers, told her the story of the Cross as she had told it so often in the days of her childhood, and fixed her thoughts upon Calvary. The mother read the words of Holy Writ to the sufferer, and the story of Mary Magdalen, and how Christ gave her His blessing. Mother and daughter pleaded at the Throne of Grace for forgiveness, and called upon God for mercy, and these prayers were answered. The poor sinful girl in her dying hours realized that Christ, the Redeemer of the world, had interceded with the Father in her behalf, and when she passed into the dim eternity it was with the joyous belief that her sins, which had been as scarlet, were washed away, and that her robes had been cleansed in the Blood of the Lamb. Oh, the smile that hovered about the wan lips as the sufferer took her last farewell of those who were weeping by her bedside. "Mother, father, brother, sisters, I'm going home ; wretched sinner that I have been, the Saviour died for me as well as for others, and I have found peace at last. Farewell."

There was joy in heaven over the redemption of this poor girl, and her redeemed soul will be the brightest star in the mother's diadem of glory when she crosses the broad river into the abode of the saints. How widely did her course differ from that of the mother referred to in my last chapter! The one turned from her doors and locked out of her heart the daughter who had eloped with and married a gambler ; the other for years left the door ajar, that the daughter who had wandered off into the pathway of shame, out into the abodes of vice and crime, might return at any hour, day or night, and find rest and shelter. The one refused to go to her daughter, whose life had been free from serious blemish, even when she was dying ; the other received her daughter, tainted, degraded, and loathsome though she was, welcomed her back to the family circle, smoothed her pathway to the grave, and was the means of saving her immortal soul. The one obeyed the dictates of society and the world, and disregarded the promptings of her heart ; the other heeded only the language of

her heart, obeyed the teachings of the Saviour, and remembered only that the fallen creature at her feet was her daughter.

One of the most beautiful young married ladies in a large Ohio city, and a very earnest and devoted Christian, had, when quite young, a narrow escape from a most terrible fate, and owes her salvation only to a mother's loving care and confidence. Her story, as related to me by a clergyman who was cognizant of the facts, was as follows:

When a mere school-girl — only sixteen years old — at her parents' home, in a pleasant New England city, she was introduced, at a dancing party, to a handsome stranger, of most polished manners and pleasing address. He seemed deeply impressed with the beautiful young girl, and she, who had no experience in society, became very much fascinated with him. Her parents objected to her intimacy with this man, partly from dislike of him and partly on account of her tender age ; but they did not for one moment suspect their daughter's admirer of any dishonorable intentions.

Having forbidden him to pay or her to receive any further attentions, the father and mother, reposing every confidence in their daughter, left home to be absent several weeks in a distant city. Scarcely had they reached their destination than they were summoned home by a telegram, stating that Julia had eloped with the stranger. They hastened back and found the elopement of their daughter the sensation of the hour. The scandal had deepened, because it became known, immediately after the departure of the stranger, that he was an adventurer of the worst description, and it was whispered that he had a wife living. Society, as is usually the case, wreaked its vengeance upon the young woman, and her name was in every one's mouth, and was bandied about with many jests and would-be witticisms. Although the daughter had committed a grievous error, although she had been guilty of the grossest disobedience, and had brought disgrace upon an unsullied name, the parents felt that she was still their child, dearer to them than all that the world and society could give,

and, following the dictates of their hearts, they started for Boston to search her out. Several days they spent in the great city before they found her whom they sought, and when at last they met her, she was nearly heart broken. Soon after she left the paternal home she got an insight into the real character of the man who had fascinated her. After reaching Boston she would fain have returned to her home, but she had not the courage to do so, in view of the scandal and gossip her departure had occasioned. At Boston her companion used every effort to induce her to comply with his wishes without the performance of a marriage ceremony, but she steadfastly refused, and finally, by the aid of an accomplice, she was entrapped by a mock ceremony, and was duly installed as the Lothario's wife (as she supposed). The villain, after a few days, abandoned his victim, taking her valuables and leaving her penniless in the great city, where she had not a friend or acquaintance. After he had left her she was dumbfounded to learn that she was not his wife in the eyes of the

law; that she had been betrayed and deceived, and would be regarded by the world as an unchaste woman, although she was more sinned against than sinning. But sixteen years old, she was totally unprepared to support herself. In utter despair, not knowing which way to turn, she wrote a farewell letter to her parents, and started out with a determination to commit suicide. She dared not return to her home, fearing that if she did she would be refused admission, and would be publicly disgraced and humiliated in the presence of the friends of her childhood. As the heart-broken, wronged girl was slowly walking the streets of the great city, her mind racked with anguish, her brain reeling under a torrent of conflicting emotions, her courage failing at the thought of the terrible deed that she had determined upon, she was ripe for the tempter. At that moment, when the world looked so black to her, and nothing but death was before her, the oily seducer, the smooth-tongued libertine, would have found her a ready victim. The one alternative to suicide was that of a life of

shame ; and although the poor young girl had not a thought of such a resort, in fact had no conception of prostitution as a means of livelihood, yet her path was leading her towards that terrible fate. Like so many who have gone before, she might hesitate and turn away on the verge of the river, and be absorbed, almost unconsciously, into the great army of strange women.

But, happily, relief came. As she was walking slowly, aimlessly about, her mind busy with recollections of the happy past, she was startled by the sound of a sweet, familiar voice, and the words, "Oh, my darling," greeted her ears. Lifting her eye from the pave she saw her mother rapidly approaching her, and her father by her side. She dared not meet their gaze, and averted her face, but in a moment more she was wrapped in that mother's fond embrace, and she felt upon her cheek the hot, burning tears which fell from the mother's eyes. The scene was so novel and striking that it attracted a large crowd of spectators, and to escape from them the father, mother

and daughter were placed in a carriage and driven to a hotel. The daughter soon related her experiences since leaving home; but although, in the eyes of the world and of society, she was a disgraced and dishonored woman, the father and mother only remembered that she was their child, and rejoiced that Providence had so directed their steps that they were able to save their loved one from a suicide's death, or, perhaps, even a worse fate than that. The forgiveness she so humbly craved was freely granted, and the next train carried the parents and their daughter back to their home. Society shrugged its shoulders and said harsh things of the young girl, and of her family; the world frowned and sneered, but Julia bore it all in silence and with Christian patience and humility. Refined by sorrow, chastened by suffering, purified by affliction, she rejoiced when she thought of the frightful doom from which she had been saved as by a miracle. For a time she and her family were excluded from the circles which they had so long adorned, but for that they cared little.

Julia's earnest piety, the sweetness and purity of her life, the angel-patience with which she bore her heavy cross, finally turned popular contempt into admiration, and derision into sympathy. Her acts of self-denying charity were numerous; and her benefactions were proverbial. In the sick chamber she was ever present, a ministering angel, and by the dying bed a very messenger from heaven. Wherever there was poverty and suffering and want; wherever there were broken hearts to bind up and aching heads to soothe; wherever there was good to be done or heaven's work to be accomplished, Julia was there, her very presence a benediction, her very face a blessing. Society for once learned a lesson, and took off its hat in reverence for her whom it would before have driven from its ranks, with the brand of shame upon her forehead, merely because, in a moment of weakness, she allowed herself to be wronged by one of the infamous scoundrels whom society nourishes.

Before long her hand was sought in marriage by a wealthy and very religious gentle-

man from Ohio. He knew every detail of her past, but the knowledge of what she had suffered only increased his love for her, and she became his wife. She has proved the best and truest of wives, is the mother of lovely children, and in her new home is an ornament to the best society, the very soul of her church, and an untiring angel of charity.

Surely that father and mother have found a rich reward for their disregard of the world's dictates, and their fidelity to the best impulses of their hearts and to the teachings of the Saviour. Had they left their erring daughter to her fate, what years of sorrow and misery would not have been theirs! Had they turned their hearts from her and closed their doors against her, what remorse and anguish would they not have suffered after she had filled a suicide's grave, or entered upon a courtesan's life?

Thousands of fallen women could have been saved from lives of degradation and deaths of shame had there been more such mothers as she who left the door ajar for her

lost child, and she of whom I have just written. Many women, naturally as pure and virtuous as Julia, have fallen to the lowest depths, because discarded by friends, frowned upon by society, and sneered at by the world after they had taken a single misstep. Surely an instance like this—and doubtless there have been many such narrow escapes—shows that no woman is necessarily lost because she takes one wrong step. When she is pondering over her error, hesitating what course to take, dreading to meet the friends of the past, and looking into the future with horror, that moment is the turning point in her career. A kind word of forgiveness, a mother's embrace, a father's welcome, may save her then; but if they do not come, if no hand is extended to help her back to the pathway of virtue, the seducer, the libertine, the procurer, will seize the opportunity and hurry her down into the frightful abyss, upon the brink of which she stands, trembling and hesitating.

Father, if your daughter goes astray, do not drive her from your home. Mother, if your

child errs, do not close your heart against her. Sisters and brothers and friends, do not force her into the pathway of shame, but rather strive to win her back into the Eden of virtue, and in nine cases out of ten you will succeed.

The author is indebted to Dr. W. H. Go-brecht, of Fort Wayne, for the following very beautiful and appropriate poem, by an anonymous author, which was clipped by him from the "Family Christian Almanac," on Aug. 25, 1868, while on the steamship "City of Boston," 800 miles east of New York, on the Atlantic Ocean :

OUR SISTER.

Up many flights of crazy stairs,
Where oft one's head knocks unawares,
With a rickety table, and without chairs,
And only a stool to kneel at prayers—

Dwells our Sister.

There is no carpet upon the floor,
The wind whistles in through the cracks of the door;
One might reckon her miseries now by the score,
But who feels an interest in one so poor ?

Yet *she* is our Sister!

She once was blooming and young and fair,
With bright blue eyes and auburn hair;
Now the rose is eaten with cankered care,
And her face is marked with a grim despair—

Our poor Sister

When at early morning, to rest her head,
She throws herself on her weary bed,
Longing to sleep the sleep of the dead,
Since youth and health and love are fled—

Pity our Sister.

But the bright sun shines on her and me,
And on mine and hers, as on thine and thee;
And whatever our lot in life may be,
Whether of low or high degree,

Still she's our sister, always our sister,

Pity her,

Succor her,

Pray for our Sister.

CHAPTER V.

THE PERILS OF POVERTY — PITFALLS FOR THE
WORKING GIRLS — HOW THEY ARE LED
TO DESTRUCTION.

In a preceding chapter I have spoken of the several principal causes of the ruin of women. Some inherit their vicious tendencies ; others fall because of misplaced affections ; many sin through a love of dress, which is fostered by society and by the surroundings amidst which they may be placed ; many, very many, embrace a life of shame to escape from poverty. In this chapter I shall briefly consider some of the many temptations to which poor young girls are exposed, especially in our cities and large towns ; showing how so many innocent maidens have been thoughtlessly led astray and crossed the Rubicon which separates the pleasant land of modesty and virtue from

the deep gulf of vice and misery, from which not one in a hundred is ever saved.

The poor girls who are unfortunate enough to be born with a natural tendency to vice, are certainly to be pitied. They inherit the evil propensities which prove their ruin, from licentious and profligate ancestors, and are just as certain to drift out into the great current of sin and shame which is forever running through our cities and towns, as the river is to flow to the sea. Their vicious tendencies develop themselves at an early age, and of all the sad sights to be seen in the purlieus and slums, on the streets and in the alleys, of our great cities, none is more heartrending, more sicken-ing, than that of mere children, hardened courtesans, lost to all sense of shame and decency, and as depraved and degraded at the age of thirteen or fourteen as the vilest harri-dan. These wretched creatures are, for the most part, the children of wicked, profligate men and women. They are born in an atmosphere of vice, and reared amidst sur-roundings of the most degrading and demoral-

izing character. Most of them are raised by their parents with no other aim than to make them harlots, and at a tender age are sold by fathers and mothers into an existence which is worse than slavery itself. Startling as these facts are, they should be known. These wretched creatures are reared in ignorance; are surrounded by the most demoralizing influences; are cut off from the blessings of church and Sabbath school; are familiar with licentiousness and profligacy and crime of all kinds in their earliest childhood. The moral sense is dead within them. There is nothing in them for the moralist or the preacher to appeal to. They have no aspirations for purity; indeed, they have no conception of it. They have no comprehension of modesty; to them it is a stranger, and has been from the cradle. These wretched outcasts are creatures of the gutter and the pavement from birth. They are "women of the town" from the beginning; what else is left for them? What can be done to save these hopeless human beings? God above only knows. We can hope for them

and pray for them, but certainly nothing much short of a miraculous interposition of Divine power can redeem those who seem so lost to all conception of modesty, of decency, and of virtue.

Those I have just spoken of are such as have selected their degraded calling, or rather, have had it chosen for them in advance, and who have no idea of any other kind of a life than that in which they were born and raised. But they do not, happily, constitute a majority of the fallen women of to-day. A large majority are those whose natural tendency is to virtue and modesty, but who, in moments of weakness, have succumbed to the temptations which surrounded them, and, having once fallen, have been forced by society to follow the terrible pathway of open shame. It is of these and of the causes of their downfall that I would speak in this chapter.

The temptations to vice, which accompany poverty, prove irresistible to many, many thousands of poor girls who are naturally chaste and virtuous, but who are driven by penury,

want and starvation, to the sacrifice of their most priceless treasure, and the hopeless wrecking of their lives and souls.

“Poverty,” says Dr. Houser; “with that word ‘poverty’ come the echoes of a thousand woes and a thousand crimes. Parents, too poor to clothe themselves, bring children into the world — children for whom they have no bread. The girl, more than the boy, feels the keen pang of want, the sense of shame for lack of clothing. She feels that there is no place in all the wide world for her, that she is an outcast, brought into the world by parents incapable of giving her the comforts and blessings of a good home, which are due to every child.

“Upon developing into womanhood, she finds *seeming* friends, believes them real, confides and falls, may-be forced to a life of shame for bread.

“Many girls thus fall that are naturally good, and would have remained so had not poverty and cruelty destroyed all of their finer feelings, outraged their natures, wronged their

spirits, crushed their hopes, blighted their fondest expectations, broken their tender, loving hearts, and cast them adrift on the surging waves of a loveless world.

“They fall, and may God pity them. In this world, none love and none forgive them ; but I believe there is a world, across the valley of sunless shadows, where rose-tinted beams of eternal light fold like angel’s wings o’er the dawn of a day that will bring to such of the fallen the matchless blessing of ceaseless rest.”

The eminent scientist and physician, Dr. Dio Lewis, in his work on “Chastity,” after naming some of the causes of prostitution, says :

“The case of the working-girl who loses her virtue is still more sad. Hunger and unkindness assail her. Her bloom fades. Her future is a black distance into which she dares not look. Temptation comes to her whose weakness should be a protection against the basest libertine that breathes. Warmth and comfort and love are offered. Her thoughts dwell on the subject incessantly. Virtue be-

comes at last an idle name to her, not the symbolic word whose translation is a pure life. She falls, and her fatal course can never be retraced."

In the same work I find the following story, which is an excellent illustration of the temptations to which poor girls are subjected in our large cities :

"A TRUE STORY.

"Virginia T—— came to Boston from a country town in Maine. She came as thousands of young women have come, seeking employment. Now out of the humdrum of her native town, and conscious of ability to achieve a career, she wept a farewell to mother and sisters, and filled with ambitious hopes, came to Boston to seek her fortune. Her neighbors foretold shipwreck, but a young woman, a neighbor, two years older than herself, had gone to New York, when about her age (twenty-three), and in a single year had established herself in the confidence of prosperous employers. Virginia saw no reason why, after always leading that young woman in the studies at school, she

might not be able, with her brighter faculties, to make her way, and thus be able to realize her dead brother's plan of providing for the loved parents when they should become too old to take care of themselves.

"So she came. Her first engagement, after trying two weeks to find something better, was running a sewing-machine in a ready-made clothing establishment. She was placed in an immense room with a hundred and fifty other girls. One of the girls, who seemed superior to all the others, immediately took Virginia under her wing, for which the country girl was very grateful. Nan soon explained things to Virginia, and induced her to leave her boarding-house and take a little room near her's in the fourth story, over a business-house where there were more than fifty rooms rented to young women. Virginia was so unsophisticated that it was a month before she suspected that Nan's companion was other than her husband, and that the young men she saw about every evening were there with illicit purpose. She had received such kindness at the hands of

her fellow-lodgers that when at length the character of the place dawned upon her, she thought it was not a bit the horrid place that she had always heard described ; and although she left it at once, still, when her friend Nan and the other girls laughed at her squeamishness, and assured her that in this way they were able to retain all their wages for dress, and that if they got into trouble there were doctors, enough of them, who could get them out of it in a week or two, poor Virginia did not shudder at all, as she would have expected ; but, being ambitious, she left and secured board in a distant part of the city. When by herself, she constantly recurred to the little, happy, well dressed community down town, and was often shocked that the thought of such a life did not bring with it a deeper sense of humiliation and shame.

“ After a few months, she secured a better position in a hoop-skirt factory down town, and at the end of two years from the time of leaving her home in Maine she returned for a visit, not only well dressed, but with a full

purse. Then came the great fire. She was thrown out of employment, and found nothing to do, until at the end of two months she was unable to meet her board bill, and had to move. In this strait she called upon her old friends, and found them as full of card parties, theaters, etc., as ever. With many solemn vows and painful misgivings she accepted their hearty offer to provide for her until she could find another situation. Soon she accepted an invitation to attend church one evening with a pleasant young man, to whom, as Virginia afterwards learned, one of her girl companions had made a suggestion. Then she visited the theater with him. After a week or two he proposed marriage. The surroundings excited her suspicions, but she promised to think of it. In the meantime, he begged her to use his purse, and not to be dependent upon poor working-girls. Entirely helpless and unable to obtain employment, she consented to borrow a little money, with the distinct understanding that she was to return it with interest. Before the hard winter was

over the sum had grown to nearly a hundred dollars.

“ Since then about ten months have passed; and now she might be heard, after they have retired at night, pleading with him to have the marriage ceremony performed. He says to her :

“ ‘ Why, Jennie, we are just as much married as any couple in the world ! My darling, don’t worry in this way; it will come out all right.’

“ He will abandon her at last, and five years from now, when she is picked up a drunken prostitute, the above true story will hardly be believed by those who realize only her shame and depravity.”

The same author, whose investigations and labors among fallen women have been very extensive, tells the following thrilling story, which is so touching, so suggestive, so true to nature, that I can not forbear reproducing it entire :

“ THE BEGINNING AND THE END.

“ One evening there was a knock at my

office door, and a young girl entered whose sunken eyes and tawdry dress stamped her as belonging to that wretched class whose trade it is to pander to the passions of men. She approached me hurriedly, and without any preliminary words of greeting said :

“ Doctor, I’ve got a friend who is very sick ; I’m afraid she is going to die. Will you come and see her ? ”

“ Her voice broke and she turned away with tears in her eyes—perhaps the purest she had shed for many a day. I arose and put on my hat.

“ ‘ Wait a moment,’ said she, ‘ I have no money and neither has she, but if you can trust the likes of me, I’ll pay you if I live long enough.’

“ ‘ Never mind that,’ said I ; ‘ let us go to your friend as soon as possible.’

“ She said nothing, but there was an eloquence greater than words in the grateful light that beamed in her poor, faded eyes.

“ She led the way to an old tenement house, on one of the worst streets in the city, up

flight after flight of rickety stairs, until we reached an attic room that bore every evidence of extreme poverty. It was a cold winter night, but there was no fire, and the wind whistled through the broken panes. Upon a dirty and ill-kept bed lay a girl whose age it was difficult to guess. Her faded and sallow complexion and haggard features might have belonged to a woman of thirty years; but when she opened her eyes, there was something in their child-like youthfulness of expression that indicated a girl not much past her first youth.

“I made an examination of her condition, and soon found that there was no hope of her recovery. She expressed no surprise when I gave my verdict, though her friend wept bitterly.

“‘Don’t cry, Annie,’ said the sick girl, faintly. ‘God knows I’m glad to go. It’s been very hard for me, and maybe the Lord will be better to me than man has been.’

“The poor girl lingered for several days. I went to see her frequently, and little by little

I won her confidence, and she told me her sad story.

“ ‘I was not always as you see me now,’ she said. ‘O, my God, how long ago it seems since I was young and happy on the old New Hampshire farm! My father used to say I was like a sunbeam in the house, I was so light-hearted and gay. He never refused my slightest wish, except in one thing: I wanted to learn a trade, so that I might have something to do in the world, just as if I had been a boy. Whenever I would talk to my father about this, he would pat me on the head as he would a child, and say that the work of the world must be done by the men; that girls must get married, and his Jessie should be no exception. And so it happened that, although I had a good education, and as much natural capacity, perhaps, as any young man of my acquaintance, yet I had no thorough knowledge of anything that could serve me as a good resource in case of need.

“ By the time I was eighteen years old both my parents were dead. It was found

that my father was in debt, and there was nothing left for me. Thus I was forced to earn my own living. I came to the city full of high hopes. I was ambitious, and determined, not only to support myself, but to win name and place in the great world. But ah! sir, I soon found that a woman has a hard battle to fight. It would sicken you to hear of all that I have been through. I commenced by answering an advertisement for cap makers. I, with four or five other girls, soon learned the trade, and we made quantities of caps. And then, as soon as the work was done and the rush over, the proprietor turned us all off without one cent of pay, as we were new hands. At last I secured a place in a store at three dollars a week, and out of this I had to pay my lodging and board. I managed to live as long as my clothes held out; then I began to suffer for the necessities of life, sir. I went without food for two days that I might buy a pair of shoes. My health gave way, living as I was without exercise, standing all day in a heated store, and sleeping in a cold room into

which the sun never shone, and in which I was never able to light a fire. I grew pale and languid and unfit for my duties. And so I was not much surprised when, at the end of a weary week, a note was handed me from my employer, saying that he would have no further need of my services. I went to my room near to desperation. I saw nowhere to turn. I was friendless and alone. I went to the minister of the church I had attended, and he said he had so many calls he could not meet them all, but that he would take my address, and if he found anything for me to do he would let me know. But in the mean time I was starving. Day after day I tried in vain to get employment. As I passed along the streets and looked with hungry eyes into the brilliantly-lighted windows, with their tempting array of fruits and eatables, bitter indeed were the thoughts that forced their way into my mind. I grew to doubt God Himself, feeling as I did so keenly the inhumanity of His creatures.

“‘ All this time, sir, before God, I never

thought of turning to vice for a support. Not the daintiest girl in the world, nursed in luxury, surrounded by loving friends, would have been more horrified at a vicious thought than I.

“‘ One day I went to a lawyer’s office, trying to get some copying to do. There was a young man in the room who listened with some interest as I talked with the lawyer; and when I left the office, he followed me, and very respectfully asked for my address, saying he might hear of some way to help me. I gave him my number in all innocence, and went my way with my heart somewhat lightened by the first words of sympathy I had heard.

“‘ That very evening it seemed to me the climax of my sorrows was reached. I had not paid my lodging bill for some weeks, and for nearly two days I had not tasted food; my landlady was clamoring for her rent. I was standing before her, weeping like any criminal, when the door opened and the young man entered whom I had seen that day in the lawyer’s office. He comprehended at a glance the position of affairs, and coming to my side, con-

fronted my landlady and asked what she meant by treating me in such a manner.

“““ I want my pay,” said she, “and I’m going to have it, too, or my fine lady will be turned into the streets.”

““ The young man drew out his purse and paid her the amount of her bill, while I sank to the floor in an agony of shame.

“““ Why, my dear girl,” said he, “you must let me be your friend. Get your hat now, and come and take a walk with me.”

““ Well, sir, that was the beginning. It went on in that way for some time before he spoke of love to me and tried to persuade me to give myself to him. O, my God ! think of it. He found me starving, cold, desolate and alone. He offered me love, warmth, light, comfort. He swore by all that was holy to be true to me for ever. What could I do ? I tried to pray, but I guess God didn’t hear my prayers, or He would have saved me.

““ You can tell how it ended, sir ; by my giving up to him the one dear possession that men take without remorse, when they had

better put a knife to the poor girl's throat and drink her life's blood.

“‘‘ For some time I was feverishly happy. My lover not only surrounded me with every material comfort, but he was so kind and tender as to win my whole heart. He told me it was not wrong in the sight of God for us to live as we did ; that it was not necessary for a preacher to pronounce a form of words over us to make us man and wife ; that nature and our hearts were our best guides.

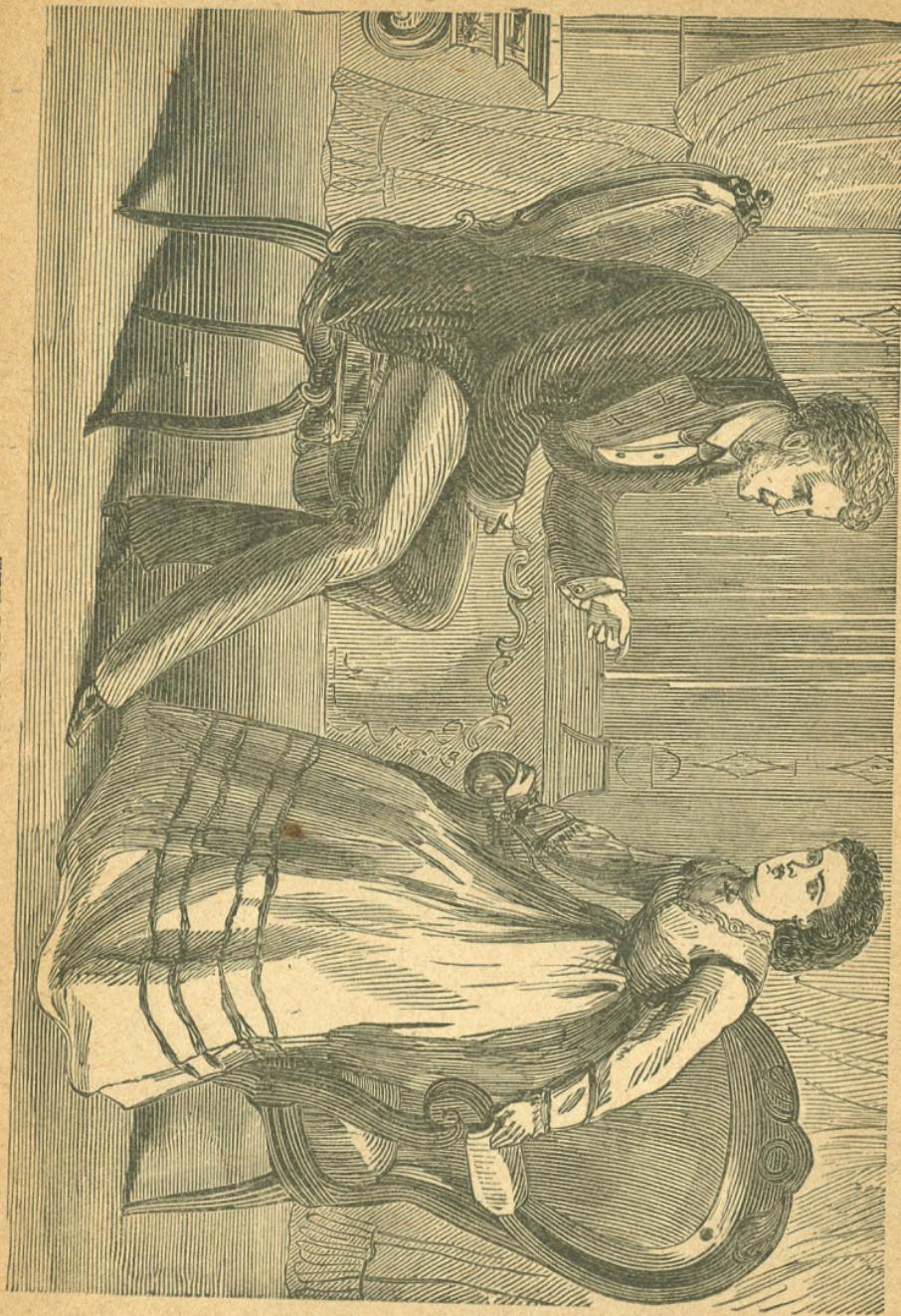
“‘‘ This sort of talk quieted me, and I tried to be happy. My lover thought me pretty, and delighted to buy beautiful articles of dress for me ; he always wished to see my face in smiles, and could not conceal his impatience if I ever gave way to grief and tears.

“‘‘ Things went on in this way for some months, until to my horror I discovered that I bore in my bosom that which would one day be a witness of my sin. No human being will ever know what I suffered when this knowledge came upon me. I had no loving mother to whom I might whisper my secret with grate-

ful pride ; no kind husband to share in my sacred joy at the first throb of that little heart. There was I alone, with no one of my own sex near me, my only companion a man who received the news I had to tell him with a muttered curse ; and instead of those happy dreams for the future in which expectant young mothers usually indulge, the best I could pray for my child was that it might grow up without the knowledge of the mother whose sin it would blush to know. Many a time have I cast myself on the floor in agony and striven to utter a prayer for my baby, but in vain. It seemed to me that a black cloud was between me and Heaven, and not a ray of light pierced through the darkness.

“ ‘ ‘ A worse suffering was to come. My lover was bitterly opposed to my having a child, and proposed that I should destroy it. I repulsed the thought in indignation, and he then said that in such a case he could have nothing further to do with me.

“ ‘ ‘ ‘ If you have a child,” said he, “ I run too many risks of being compromised.”





“‘ And with that he left me—this man who had taken advantage of my helplessness and done me the most cruel wrong one mortal could do another—he left me because I would not consent to become a murderer to prevent his being compromised.

“‘ This grief was too much for my physical endurance. I sank under it. My babe was born prematurely, and only lived long enough for me to feel the little aimless hands touch my bosom, the little loving lips touch mine. And I vowed in that moment to purify my life for my baby’s sake.

“‘ As soon as I was able I resumed my search for employment; but again the conviction that I was one too many in the world was forced upon me. My every effort was frowned down by those to whom I would tell any thing of my past life. I struggled along, however, and finally secured a place as seamstress in a wealthy family. Here I began to know a certain peace. I was well treated. I had told nothing of my story, knowing that to do so would secure my being turned out of the

house. My employer was named Sedley, and I was engaged to assist in making the wedding clothes of Miss Grace, the oldest daughter.

“‘ One day this young lady came into the room where I was sewing, dressed for a drive. She was detained longer than she expected, giving me directions, and a young man entered, with the words, “Come, Grace, we shall be late for our drive.”

“‘ Sir, that man was Edward White, my seducer, the father of my child, now the engaged lover of Grace Sedley. I rose from my seat, and involuntarily spoke his name.

“‘ “What does this mean ?” said Mrs. Sedley ; “what does this girl know of you, Edward ?”

“‘ He turned to Miss Grace, saying pointedly :

“‘ “Grace, will you leave the room a few moments ?”

“‘ She did so, and he turned to Mrs. Sedley :

“‘ “This girl, madam—Jessie she called herself to me; I don’t know what name she

has given you—is a girl of bad character, a very unfit person to have in your house."

"““How do you know so much about her?” said Mrs. Sedley, smiling slightly.

"““My dear madam,” he said, “when you consented to give me your daughter, I told you I had been no saint. My past life, I suppose, has been a little free, like that of most other young men; but rest assured the purity of your daughter is a sufficient guarantee of my future. As for this person,” and he pointed to me, “all I have to say is that the sooner she is out of your house the better.”

"“Here he left the room, and Mrs. Sedley turned to me with hard, cruel words.

"““Get out of my house, you shameless creature,” she said, “and don’t dare to apply to me for a character, for I shall tell everybody just what you are.”

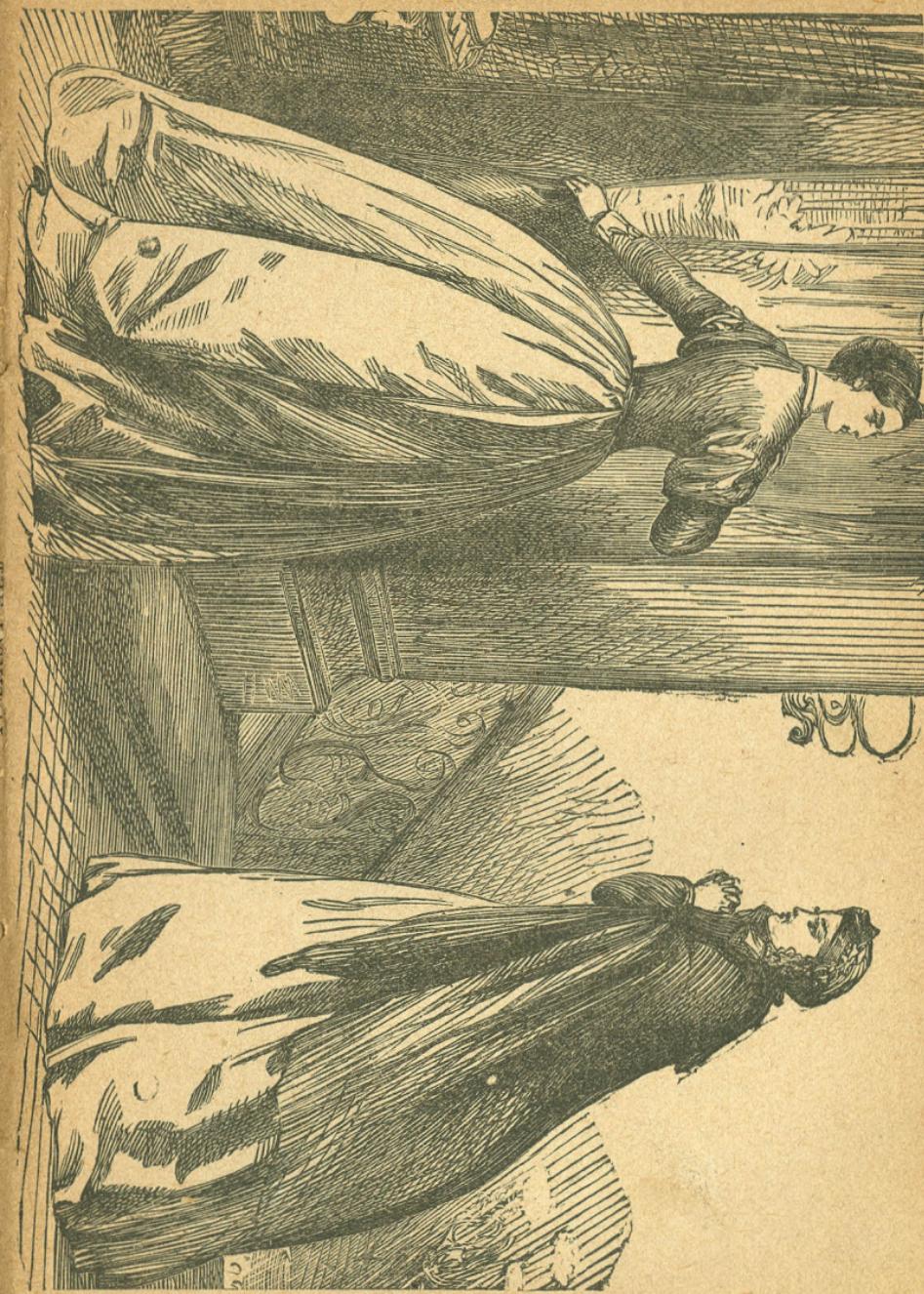
"“I was too broken-spirited to attempt any reply, but from my soul I wondered what was the wide moral gulf between the oppressed, unhappy girl, and the depraved man who had

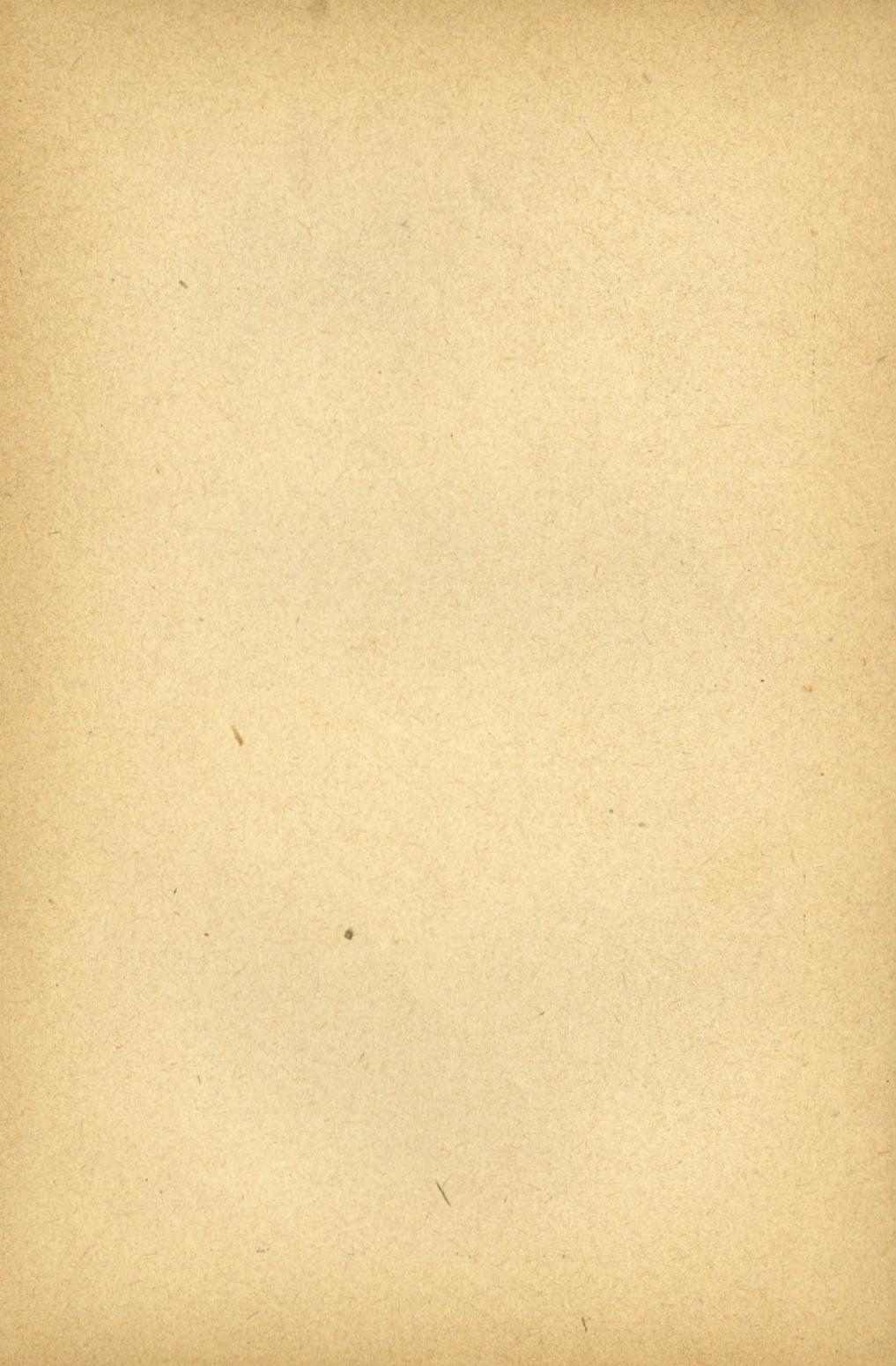
endeavored to make her nature as depraved as his own.

“‘ Some weeks after that I saw the bridal party move to the carriages. A velvet carpet was spread for her to walk upon ; she was crowned with flowers and dressed in white. He looked as tender and careful of her as if she were too precious for the winds to blow upon. I watched them ; I, the outcast, the degraded, the wretched. O, God ! was it to my blame and her credit that we both stood where we did ? Or is there a dreadful wrong somewhere ?

“‘ There isn’t much more to tell, sir. I had passed through so much that my health was all gone, I think. I would have starved but for Annie, here. Poor Annie hasn’t had much chance in life herself. She is what you’d call a bad girl ; but if some of the good ones had been more like her, sir, I wouldn’t have been the poor lost creature that I am.

“‘ I’m very glad to die, sir. I don’t know what else there is for poor girls like me to do.’





“Imagine, if you can, friends who read this story, the circumstances under which it was told, and the powerful effect it had upon me. It was not told connectedly, as I have given it, but brokenly, with gasps between the sentences and long pauses for rest.

“Comment upon such a story is almost needless; it speaks so loudly of the wrongs of a woman’s life. The very angels might weep to think of poor Jessie in her New Hampshire home, as blithe and beautiful as a bird in the forest, and then look upon her, ragged, emaciated and dying a miserable death in a city garret. And perhaps, better than man, the angels will know how to judge of all such cases, and at whose door the sin really lies.

“The father teaching that marriage is a girl’s only resource, the employer paying starvation wages, the man sacrificing a human soul to his brutal, selfish passion, the fine lady pushing a poor creature back to vice for a support by closing the door of an honest livelihood,—these people all represent classes, and perhaps, in the long run, it will be found that

they have more to answer for than the victims of their false and selfish systems.

“ After my fourth visit to Jessie, I was unexpectedly called from home, and did not return for some days. I hastened to see her as soon as I got back. As I neared the place I saw a wagon driving away from it with a plain deal coffin tumbled carelessly in it. The one mourner was a weeping girl, whom I recognized as Annie. I joined her. She told me of the last hours of her friend.

“ ‘Just before she died, sir,’ sobbed Annie, ‘she looked up at me with her face all shining and peaceful, and she said: “Annie, I think my little baby has prayed for me, and maybe, after all, God will forgive me, for it’s been very hard.” ’

“ What do you think, my reader?”

Dr. Lewis relates a good many instances which have come under his observation, in which poverty has caused the ruin of innocent, pure-minded girls, who had to choose between shame and starvation. They approached their doom almost unconsciously, taking the first

steps innocently, the libertine coming to them with words of cheer and kindness, the first they had heard, mayhap, for many a long day. Is it a wonder that these poor creatures fall, or that, when every avenue of employment is closed to them, every honorable door is shut against them, they at last find their refuge in the house of shame, and plunge into the vortex of disease and death?

This class of fallen women can easily be saved, if the proper efforts are only made. There is not one of them who does not loathe and despise her terrible existence; not one who would not in a moment exchange her life of gilded sin for one of honest (however humble) virtue. They are made courtesans because, in youth, under our present social system, they are not taught any useful trade or occupation, by which to gain a livelihood when thrown upon their own resources; because employers remorselessly take advantage of their necessities and compel them to work for a beggarly pittance which will hardly keep body and soul together. The whole world

seems to be turned against them, and when they hear words of kindness and sympathy, spoken in the guise of friendship by the heartless libertine and seducer, is it any wonder that they listen and fall, only to be betrayed and abandoned? Then all efforts to rise are futile. If they tell the story of their lives, how many men or women, even among professors of religion, will open their doors to them and afford them an opportunity to support themselves by honest, humble industry, and to atone for the past by lives of purity and virtue? If they conceal their shame, and strive to hide their sin, and thus succeed in securing employment, is exposure not almost inevitable, and then the proud lady of wealth and fashion gathers her skirts about her, as if fearing contamination, and drives the poor creature from her house into the streets, as in the case just related, cutting off from her reach every opportunity to save herself, and forcing her down into the depths of degradation from which she has vainly striven to escape.

In a pleasant little village in Northern In-

diana, about five years ago, there lived as happy a family as I ever knew, composed of father, mother, three daughters and three sons. The father was in moderate circumstances, but being postmaster of the village was able to support his wife and children in decency and comfort, although not in luxury. In order to make some provision for them in the event of his death, he had his life insured for a goodly sum. About four years ago he was drowned, and the widow, who had thought her future secure, found to her great sorrow that the last payment had not been made on the policy of insurance, and that it had become forfeited only two or three days before the fatal accident. Left entirely without resources, with a large family to provide for, the good woman was almost desperate. Her daughters had all married mechanics of humble means. Two of them were provided for, but were unable to assist her ; the third, a young and beautiful girl, slender in figure, delicate in health, had wedded a dissipated, worthless cigar-maker, who had heartlessly abandoned her just before her

child was born, and left her to battle with the world and care for her babe, wholly without means. Of the three sons, two were little boys, and the third, who had attained the years of manhood, was idle, dissipated and worthless, a curse rather than a blessing. Then began a prolonged struggle with starvation. The widowed mother, the worse than widowed daughter and her infant child, with the two little boys went to the city of my residence, and tried in every possible way to gain a subsistence. The mother, who was in feeble health, accepted any employment, however hard or distasteful. She scrubbed, and washed, and ironed, and nursed the sick, and was forced, by the wealthy and affluent, to work night and day for the barest pittance.

The young daughter and mother nursed and cared for her babe, and although delicate and broken in health, she toiled with her needle through the long days and late into the nights, working at the sewing machine until a hectic flush mounted her fair cheeks. Her sunken eyes shone with unnatural brilliancy,

and sharp pains passed through her wasted body. And when she could get no sewing or fancy work to do, she, too, did washing and scrubbing and nursed the sick, and all for the most slender wages. Mother and daughter wasted away; their health was shattered from exposure, and labor, and lack of food, medicine and clothing. All this time this fair young girl who, in spite of poverty and sickness and labor, was still beautiful, was meeting with temptations to sacrifice her virtue. Libertines and seducers were on her track, but she repulsed them all and declared proudly that she would rather starve than accede to their wishes, rather die than surrender her virtue. But darker hours were yet to come. Her mother fell sick and was no longer able to toil; her babe was ill and suffering for food, and warm clothing, and medical attendance and medicine. The rent of her humble quarters was due, and the family would be ejected if it were not paid. Her little brothers were ragged and hungry. It was mid-Winter, and she could get no work; and even had employment offered,

she could hardly have accepted, because of her delicate health, and the demands of her sick mother and babe. Despair filled her soul, and in the presence of the suffering and privations of her loved ones, she determined to sacrifice herself for their sake. She sallied forth, resolved to sell her soul to whoever would buy; and save, perhaps, her darling's life.

Repeatedly since this girl's surrender, has she tried to obtain honorable employment, but those who have dragged her down are determined to keep her in the depths, and she finds herself a shunned and dishonored creature.

When I last saw her the hectic flush of consumption was in her cheeks, the feverish glare of disease was in her eyes. Death had marked her for his own; and ere many months she will go to her grave, another victim to the coldness, the selfishness, the heartlessness of society. So far from being censured for her fall, she is rather to be commended for the brave and heroic resistance she made to the tempter. If she had a fault, it was that she was too proud to beg; but how many of her more fortunate

sisters, who would feel themselves tainted by contact with her, could withstand the temptations she resisted so long, or preserve their virtue amidst such trials as this poor girl had to meet.

Oh! it is a fearful thing, in this nineteenth century, this age of civilization, refinement and Christianity, this period of general prosperity and plenty, that poverty should drive women, naturally pure and virtuous, to sell their souls for bread. The blood of these poor creatures is upon the skirts of society, and society must expect to reap the curse.

The temptations which are thrown about poor women and girls in our cities and towns are terrible.

The factory girls, the clerks, the milliners, the seamstresses, in our great cities have to toil like slaves for the most beggarly wages. The hard labor to which they give their days scarcely suffices to procure for them the bare necessities of life. They are compelled to dwell in humble apartments, to dress in scanty attire, to forego the pleasures and amusements

of society, and to constantly see before them the luxury, the splendor, the wealth which the few enjoy. These girls are surrounded by all manner of temptations and are offered every inducement to exchange their lives of honest, humble industry for gilded, luxurious vice. The road to perdition is a seductive and inviting one. Few, very few, begin to tread it realizing where it leads, or expecting to suffer any harm. They find it easy for them to make male acquaintances; handsome, polished, well-dressed fellows, who invite them out for an evening's amusement. They find their existence dull and monotonous, and greedily accept the opportunity to "have a little fun."

Alas, the fun often proves very costly. They go to the theater and their mind is poisoned by such pernicious plays as "Camille" and "Madeline Morel." They take a ride with some new found acquaintance, and he pours into their ears words of deep meaning and terrible import. Next they are invited to an oyster supper, with gay companions and pleasant surroundings. Perhaps they are induced to put



THE APPOINTMENT.



the wine cup to their lips, and under its influence to commit improprieties which would have shocked them before they entered upon the pursuit of pleasure. The next step in their downward career, and they visit the public dance halls, those stepping stones to hell, which abound in the metropolitan cities, over whose portals should be placed Dante's dread inscription: "Who enters here leaves hope behind."

So it is that thousands of working girls in our cities enter, innocently and unsuspectingly, into the paths which lead them to the houses of evil, or to wander the streets, miserable outcasts, doomed to a wretched existence and a premature death.

How true the words of the poet:

"Vice is a monster of such hideous mien,
That to be hated, needs but to be seen;
Yet seen too oft, familiar with his face,
We first endure, then pity, then embrace."

The theater; the drive, the oyster supper, the dance hall—these are the mile stones which mark the working girl's journey from virtue to vice, from modesty to shame. The gay fellow who has lavished his attentions upon her, and

afforded her a taste of the world's pleasure, to which she had before been a stranger, finally effects her ruin, she is duly installed as his mistress, but in time he abandons her to go in quest of other game. Thus deserted, her conscience burdened with the knowledge of her sin, her mind tainted and sullied by the experience she has had, she loses her pride in her work and finds herself possessed of an aversion for humble labor. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred her moral descent is rapid from this time forward, and a few years finds her the depraved and degraded inmate of a brothel, the vile creature of the pave, the occupant of a prison cell, an almshouse or an insane asylum, or perhaps the tenant of a suicide's grave.

The saleswoman, the seamstress, the factory girl had better, far better, die than take the first step in the path which I have just described. Better, a thousand times better, better for this life, better for the life to come, an existence of humble, virtuous industry, than a single departure from virtue, even though it were paid with a fortune.

CHAPTER VI.

SOME TEMPTATIONS OF CITY LIFE — THE THEATER — THE RACE COURSE — STREET FLIRTATIONS, ETC.

One of the fruitful causes of prostitution is the love of dress, which, in the breasts of so many women, is the overpowering passion and which leads such multitudes of them into careers of infamy. Many foolish girls have been led by this passion to sell their virtue for gold, in order to possess the means of bedecking their bodies with gorgeous raiment. These silly creatures envy the gaily, flashily dressed courtesan whom they pass on the street, and imagine that she is happy because of her magnificent apparel. How little they realize what awful misery is disguised by her silks and velvets.

Of course those who can ascribe their fall

to a love for dress, do not possess those strong virtuous instincts which would protect them against these temptations to unchastity. Many of them are girls of great personal beauty and moderate intellect. They are born of humble parents, reared in a modest, simple way, and do not possess the means of gratifying their taste for personal adornment. Large numbers of them are raised on the farm, or in some quiet, unpretentious country town or village. They see about them those who can afford to dress elegantly, and they morbidly contrast their own slender purses with those of their neighbors. At the village dance they find their shabby attire contrasting unfavorably with the dresses of other guests. By and by they drift to the city. Perhaps they go out to service, or to clerk, or sew; or perhaps, with the false ideas of feminine "independence" (?) which prevail, they remain at home without useful employment, a burden upon an overworked, underpaid father. They catch a glimpse of rich dressing at the theater, on the streets, in the great storehouses of fashion, in the elegant car-

riages which roll past them. By and by they come to regard dress as the chief aim and object of woman's existence ; and to possess the means to gratify this passion, they are ready to exchange their dearest treasure,—that most priceless jewel, their virtue. Then the tempter comes along, and finds an easy victim. And the sad story ends in the house of shame.

Many wives of men of moderate means — clerks, mechanics, engineers, and men of all kinds, who receive wages sufficient to support themselves and their families in comfort, but not in luxury, have proved false to the men whose names they bore, unfaithful to the sacred vows they took at the marriage altar, and abandoned home and children in order to obtain the money with which to dress richly and extravagantly, and to gain access to gay, worldly society. A few weeks ago American circles in Paris were shocked beyond measure at the suicide of Mrs. Annie Wetmore, who had become famous in the frivolous circles of the gay French capital for her rare beauty of face and figure, her handsome dressing and her social

indiscretions. Her career was a romantic one, and carries a moral which should be heeded by those foolish women who are not satisfied with the love of a poor husband, who find virtue in a cottage to be monotonous, and who barter their souls and sacrifice their eternal welfare in order that they may enjoy a few short years of life amid the gilded trappings of vice and luxury.

Her story can soon be told. Some fifteen years ago her ambition to shine in social life, coupled with the beauty of her person and her natural sprightliness and vivacity, secured her an easy admittance into the gay society of New York. Dazzled by social successes, by the flattery of numerous admirers, and the glitter of a gay life, for which her early education and surroundings had not prepared her, she lost all taste for the duties of her proper sphere as the wife of a poor but worthy clerk in the New York Custom House, became estranged from her husband, and finally abandoned her home and crossed the ocean to become the victim of a social tragedy. The people who knew her

well say that the motives which have guided her career for the past twelve years led naturally step by step to the bitter denouement. Many of the residents of Stratford, Connecticut, where the unfortunate woman passed her girlhood, remember her as a maiden of rare attractions. She was the daughter of William C. Dougherty, a commission merchant in that city. She was a tall and slender brunette, with lovely and expressive features, exceedingly graceful in bearing, vivacious in manner, and sparkling in conversation. Among her many wooers was a gentleman who has since become very wealthy in New York, and who still lives a bachelor. Some twenty-two years ago, when she was nineteen years of age, she was married to William Wetmore, son of the president of the New York Juvenile Asylum. The fathers of the young couple were both in moderate circumstances, but, by combining the funds they had set apart for a wedding present, they were able to present Mrs. Wetmore with a comfortable cottage. Young Wetmore was just entering business life as a poorly-paid clerk in the

Custom House. His salary was barely sufficient to provide the necessities of life, and for several years the young people were partly dependent upon the generosity of the elder Mr. Wetmore. The young wife, her friends say, early became discontented with the meagerness and poverty of her home. She often upbraided herself with her folly in marrying a poor man, and their straitened circumstances were the primal cause of the coldness that grew up between husband and wife. Mr. Wetmore, moreover, was a professor of religion, had little or no sympathy with the social ambitions of his wife, and wished her to go to religious meetings when she much preferred more sparkling and gayer society. He desired, besides, to practice economy, and by perseverance and self-denial to make his way, while his wife was extravagant in her tastes and had no sympathy with her husband's aims. After some seven years of unhappy married life, spent in comparative seclusion, Mrs. Wetmore blossomed easily and speedily into a more congenial sort of existence as a society belle. Her circle of society friends

were by no means the most exclusive and aristocratic "set" in New York, but they were a gay lot, wealthy and pretentious, figured in all the leading events of the fashionable season, and were altogether congenial to the tastes of Mrs. Wetmore. She was intoxicated with the homage done her beauty and gay social qualities. She was one of the pets of the social circle which claimed her, was in great demand at all the routs and dances of the season, contrived to dress in accordance with the demands of her social position, and encountered any number of admirers, the devotion of some of whom was unmistakable. This sort of life led her so completely away from her husband and home that the couple finally separated very quietly. Their paths thereafter led entirely apart. Wetmore came West to take a position on a railroad, and Mrs. Wetmore, twelve years ago, crossed the ocean alone and in an adventurous spirit, in quest of new social worlds to conquer. She was then about thirty years old, and in the prime of her charms. She has since lived in London and Paris, where she has been

well known to the American colonies in those cities. She made considerable impression in some of the gay circles of London, and of late years has spent most of her time in the French capital. About four years ago she returned to America for a short visit, but was not content to remain long away from the gayer life of Paris. She was particularly proud of her list of titled acquaintances, and the society to which she was admitted abroad was largely that in which the younger scions of noble houses were the bright particular lights. It was while leading this butterfly life, wholly devoted to society, its conquests and its pleasures, that Mrs. Wetmore, about three years ago, first met the Marquis of Anglesey, then Lord Henry Paget, who, with the well-known susceptibility of the Anglesey family, became very much infatuated with the lovely American. The Marquis is one of the handsomest men in England, and his devotion to Mrs. Wetmore was by her sincerely encouraged. It is said that she was not tempted merely by his title, but that she passionately loved the man. She told

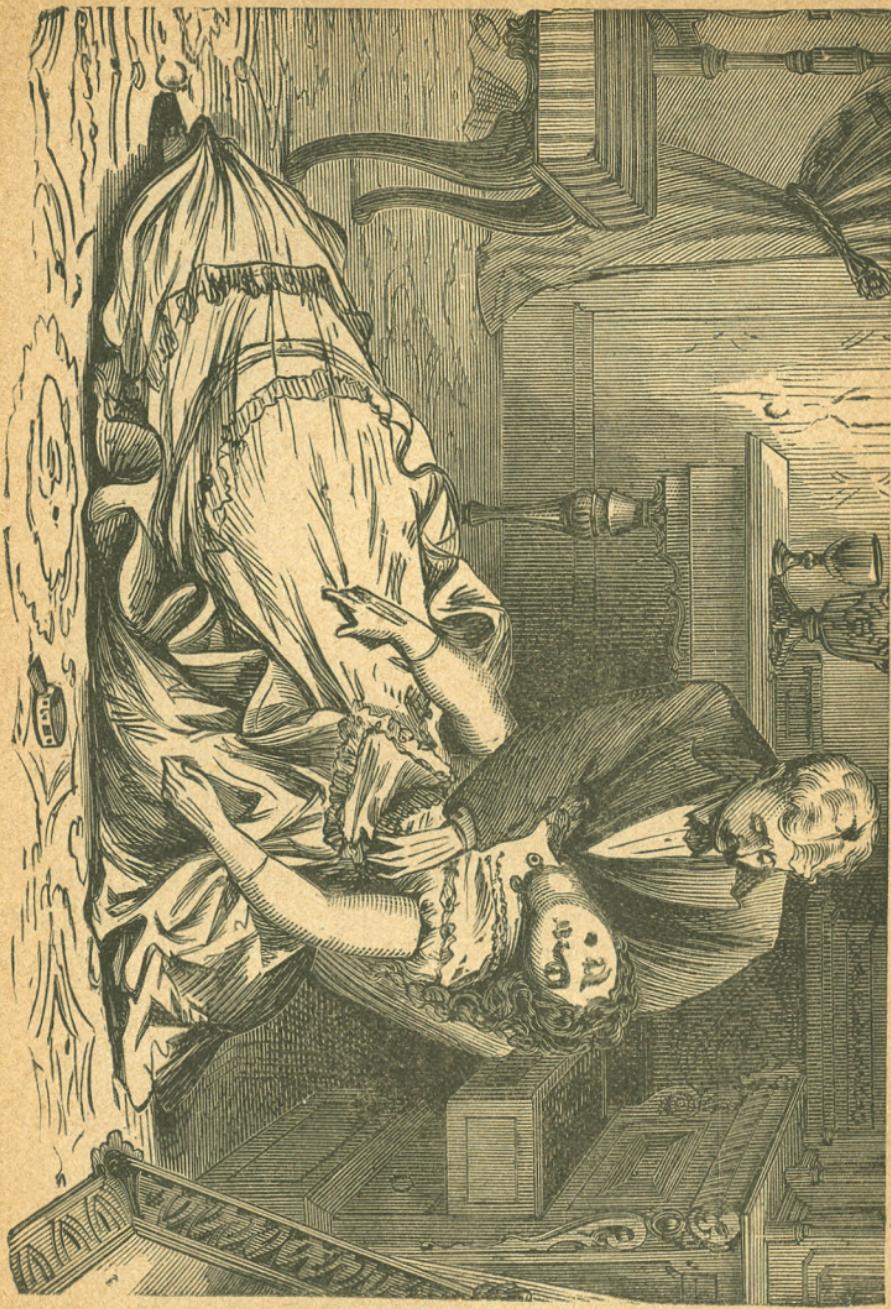
some of her intimate friends two years ago that nothing but the hateful tie which still bound her to William Wetmore prevented her from being then the wife of Henry Paget. If this was true, it was wofully unfortunate for her future that the obstacle of her former marriage stood in her way; for, being unable to legalize their intimacy, Mrs. Wetmore, it is stated, became the mistress of the Marquis of Anglesey, and lived in splendid apartments in the same building which he occupied. The relations between the two were very well understood by their friends, but whether there was between them an engagement of marriage to be consummated when Mrs. Wetmore had thrown off the yoke she bore, seems in the minds of her New York friends to be involved in doubt. They say, however, that she hoped for an honorable alliance with the Marquis, and they think she believed she would one day be his wife. She learned with pleasure, two years ago, that her husband had begun a suit for divorce on the ground of desertion. He obtained a decree.

Her father, who has since died, wrote her

that if she desired he could have the decree set aside because she had not been notified of the suit. She replied that she was more than satisfied with the course affairs has taken. She could not, however, retain her supremacy over the Marquis. The members of the Anglesey family have always been great gallants, and have never been noted for constancy in their love affairs. The intrusion of the Hon. Mrs. Wodehouse, *neé* King, of Georgia, into the affections which Mrs. Wetmore had held, drove the unfortunate woman to despair, and she ended her life with poison. In Mrs. Wetmore's own words, "My fate should be a warning to American women who come abroad without their legitimate protectors."

The sad fate of this gifted and beautiful woman should certainly be a terrible warning to every one of her sex who allows a love of dress and gay society to dazzle her senses, blind her judgment and obliterate in her mind the great distinctions between right and wrong.

Too often weak parents encourage a love for dress in their daughters, and the conse-



quences are frequently of the most terrible nature. Dr. Dio Lewis tells how three sisters were wrecked by this dangerous passion, which their parents fostered and nurtured. The story is a brief one, and is so appropriate that I can not forbear quoting it in full:

“Mr. S. had six daughters, and they had the misfortune to be pretty. As they grew up the clothes question became perplexing. The father could feed his large family, but not much more. Everybody said that if they could be handsomely dressed, they would be the most attractive young ladies in the country. ‘It was a pity that they could not be fixed up in style.’ The girls clamored for ‘something decent to wear.’ They were too beautiful to go out to service, too ignorant to teach anything, and too proud to learn trades, as boys would have done. There seemed nothing left but marriage. They displayed their remarkable charms. Their father staggered under the load, and these beautiful young creatures, without trade or profession, were compelled to bring every attraction to the counter.

"At length Mary, who was understood to be engaged to a young man of means, suddenly appeared with a silk dress and a gold watch. Her lover invited her to accompany him to New York to see his mother, and to stay with her a few months, that the family might become acquainted with her. Later the older sister was invited to visit Mary, who was still staying with her future mother-in-law. Susan went, solemnly charged by her mother to write all about Mary's friends, and to let them know when Mary was coming home to be married. In due time the letter came, full of disappointment and dark hints. Susan promised to return home at once. The next letter did not arrive under a fortnight; but when it did come, it was full of delight with the city and all its wonderful sights. A varying correspondence was kept up between the family and their daughters in New York, when at length the girls came home visiting. They were splendidly dressed. The girls told us that Mary's future mother-in-law had a brother who had brought oceans of money from the East Indies, and thought all

the world of them, and gave them everything they wanted.

“At the end of a week the girls returned to New York. They had hardly reached the city before their father, who had followed them, walked into their city home. He knew but little of the world, but he was not long in finding out the character of the house where his daughters were stopping. In a long and painful interview they confessed all, but refused to return home. In the city they could go to the theater, and their friends gave them everything that heart could wish. The father pleaded with tears and heart-breaking sobs, but they could not think of going back. The father threatened and started out for an officer. When he returned, the girls were gone, and after staying about for two or three days, he came back home, bringing sorrow and shame to his household.

“Libertines soon began to call on the other girls. The parents, after anxious consultation with the minister and other friends, resolved to take their family to Wisconsin. After some

weeks of preparation, consisting in part of the sale of household furniture to secure the needed funds, the tickets were purchased, and on a certain Monday we gathered at the depot to see them off.

“But where was Nelly? She was the fourth daughter, and the most beautiful creature I ever saw. We ran hither and thither, but she could not be found. While all were wild, a young man came hurrying into the station who had met her driving away as fast as horses could fly, with Captain D——, a dissipated man of forty, well known in the neighborhood.

“The train came and went, and the crushed parents sat in a corner unable to move or speak. They returned to the house of a friend, where they remained two or three days, hoping to hear from Nelly. A letter came from her, not to her family, but to a girl in the village. She wrote in the happiest temper, said she was to be married to a nice man, very rich, and was then going abroad.

“The captain swapped girls with a friend

of his within a month, and Nelly soon went to New York. Then we lost sight of the family. About two years afterward, Susan, the second girl, came back to our village, but oh, how changed! She was far gone in consumption, and confessed to our village minister that drink and the birth of a baby had killed her. She brought sad news from beautiful Nelly, whose dissipated career was rapidly shortening her days. The oldest sister had married a gambler, and had been traded four times for the wives of other gamblers. She was fading, and had contracted a disease which had injured her voice. New York consumes several thousand girls in this way every year."

Dr. Lewis, whose views upon this subject are certainly entitled to great weight, thinks that the social evil can be reduced to small dimensions, and eventually cured, if girls will only learn remunerative trades, as boys do. The number of those who pursue a life of shame because they like it, is comparatively insignificant. But young girls, thrown upon their own resources, find themselves unable to

supply their natural wants. "A hundred men stand ready to fill their treasury to overflowing if they will only consent. That ten girls do not lapse where one goes astray, is a triumphant proof of their innate chastity."

Dr. Lewis wonders why more country girls who go to cities, do not prefer the free, independent, healthful life of domestic service, to the hard, ill-paid, unwholesome labors of sewing or clerking. He adds:

"What must be thought of the moral sense of these New England girls, when it is truthfully stated that for *one* who leaves the position of sewing-girl for the care of a kitchen, *ten* leave to serve as kept mistresses? I have not known of a single one who, with a true appreciation of the advantages, has chosen the kitchen, while I have known a number who have deliberately chosen to respond to the vile advertisements which appear daily in one of our papers under the head of 'Personal.'"

Those who allow themselves to sacrifice their virtue to gratify a love of dress and gay society, are not entitled to the sympathy which

we should accord to their erring sisters, who have been driven to lives of infamy by grinding poverty, or have fallen from their high estate through the devilish machinations of the libertine. But at the same time I can not refrain from asking the question: "Hasn't society a great deal to do with the ruin of these foolish women? Doesn't society encourage all manner of extravagance in dress? Doesn't society prompt people of humble means to attempt a ruinous rivalry with their neighbors who possess longer purses? Doesn't society uphold the employer who discriminates so severely against women in the payment of wages? Doesn't society teach that certain occupations in which thousands of poor women could gain a decent and honorable livelihood, are not respectable?" All these questions, I fear, can only be truthfully answered in the affirmative.

I will here take occasion to briefly refer to some frequent causes of women's ruin, other than those I have written of in this volume.

Many women have been led astray through

the influence of the theater. The stage is seductive and inviting, and young women can not guard themselves too strongly against its allurements. The drama is corrupt beyond measure, and there seems little hope for its purification. There are very few pure plays on the stage, and they do not prove popular. Most of the successful plays of the present day are in the highest degree immoral. The heroes and heroines are vile characters, and the plots are so skillfully arranged as to gain for them the sympathy of the audiences. The incidents are demoralizing, the language is impure and unchaste. The operas are even worse than the plays. But in both the indecent display of the female form is made one of the chief attractions. The burlesques and ballets and spectacles which are now "all the rage," are worse than either play or opera. They are essentially indecent and degrading, and should not be tolerated.

Pure-minded young women can not attend the theater without contamination. There they imbibe false ideas of life, of society and

religion, which prepare their minds to succumb to the temptations of the seducer. They listen to coarse, vulgar language, which at first brings the crimson blush to their maiden cheeks, but with which they finally become familiarized. They see immodest exhibitions of the feminine person, and watch the development of vulgar and sensational plots. At the theater, too, they are thrown among worldly people, and too often it is followed by the oyster supper, the wine glass, the dance-house — and finally the fall from virtue. Alas, how many fallen creatures can date their ruin from their first visit to the theater. Although the stage is sustained and patronized by many professing Christians, its influence is none the less pernicious and demoralizing for all that. In fact, it is thus only rendered more fascinating, and hence more dangerous by the countenance it receives from such people; and I can not forbear raising my voice against it, and warning young women who desire to remain spotless and blameless, from visiting it. It has in the past led many of their sisters into

the pathway of shame, and is still performing that dreadful work.

It has become very fashionable in our large cities for ladies to attend horse races. Many women who are active in the churches go to such affairs, and take with them their daughters. In this they do a great wrong, and oftentimes the consequences are terrible. They countenance by their presence such degrading vices as drunkenness and gambling. They breathe an atmosphere, at the race track, which no pure woman should inhale. Their ears are oftentimes saluted with the most frightful profanity and blasphemy, the most shocking vulgarity and obscenity. They are in the presence of gamblers, saloonkeepers, seducers, libertines, and in fact all the "fast men" in the community. Those who would have their wives and daughters and sisters live pure, chaste, virtuous lives, should keep them away from the race track, for it is the scene of all kinds of temptations, and its effect is demoralizing and brutalizing in the highest degree.

Many promising young girls have been led astray by smooth-tongued, fascinating strangers with whom they have become acquainted on the cars, or by "handkerchief flirtations" on the streets, or by answering "personal" advertisements in the newspapers. No young woman should ever make the acquaintance of any man by these means. The men who introduce themselves to girls on the cars, who wave handkerchiefs at them in the streets, who insert "personal" advertisements in the newspapers, mean evil and nothing but evil. No young woman, who desires to retain her chastity, her virtue, her self-respect, will notice them for a moment. Thousands of miserable outcasts have been brought down to their present level, because when thoughtless maidens, perhaps innocent school girls, they engaged in street flirtations, or opened correspondence with strangers who advertised in the newspapers. Let a young woman be observed using her handkerchief in a street flirtation, and her reputation will never again be what it has been. Her name will not be spoken by the young men and

boys "about town" with respect, but it will become the subject of jest and ribaldry.

All the temptations I have spoken of in this chapter are snares laid by wicked men for the purpose of entrapping innocent young girls. They should shun these pitfalls as they would the serpent's bite, and parents, who desire to save their daughters from a fate which is worse than death, should endeavor, by every means in their power, to keep them from falling into the traps thus cunningly devised for them.

CHAPTER VII.

THE LIFE OF A FALLEN QUEEN—FROM A PALACE TO AN ALLEY, AND THEN TO AN INSANE ASYLUM.

Of all human beings, the professional prostitute is certainly the most miserable and wretched. Her life is a living death, whose horrors it would require an abler pen than mine to portray. Whether she be the inmate of the gilded palace of sin, with its rich Oriental carpets, its luxurious tapestries and upholstery, its frescoed walls and ceilings, its costly chandeliers, and stately mirrors and ravishing pictures; or whether, in an humbler abode, she sells her soul and body for paltry pelf, and sins and suffers amidst the accompaniments of penury and want; or whether, in the last stages of her hopeless existence, even the miserable boon of this humble abode is denied her, and

she wanders up and down the streets and alleys in rags and hunger, craving food and drink, or the stupefying drugs with which she is wont to dull her whetted senses and bring rest to her jaded form; whether in the prison cell or the mad house, or shuddering upon the bank of the deep, cold river, into which she is about to make the final plunge, the fallen woman is the most wretched, the most miserable, the most degraded of all God's creatures. Her home (if she has one) is a charnel house, full of woe; her body is racked with the pains and the torments which are as sure to follow a life of dissipation and debauchery as night is to succeed day; her conscience, long blunted, and warped and seared by her life of degradation, is occasionally awakened to torture her with its reproaches and embitter her life with premonitions of the terrible eternity of blackness and woe toward which she is rapidly and surely drifting; her mind is filled with remorse over her past life and a horrible dread of the future. Hating herself, she is loathed and despised by others.

Most women, after they have chosen a

vicious life, fall to even a lower depth than is ever reached by the most degraded men. They plunge into the wildest excesses, are guilty of the most terrible blasphemy and obscenity; pride themselves on their shocking wantonness and recklessness, which are oftentimes exhibited with a brazenness and bravado that make even the most hardened and depraved of their male associates shudder.

After a woman has crossed the line, she in a majority of instances cherishes for a time the hope of reform, and keeps herself within some limits of outward decency and decorum. So long as that hope remains, she is careful to stoop no lower than compelled to by her dreadful calling; but let that hope be once taken away, let her once imbibe the idea that there is no chance for her in this life, and no salvation for her in the life to come, and she throws aside all restraint and plunges as deep into the vortex of vice and shame as it is possible for a human being to go. It is said by those who have made the most patient and thorough investigations into the social evil in

our large cities, that, in most instances, the women who reach the very lowest stages of depravity are those who have fallen from the highest pinnacle of modesty and virtue. The reason for this is obvious. The women who have been reared in an atmosphere of vice and profligacy, enter upon their wretched careers at an early age, when they are already so calloused to sin that they escape those awful reproaches of conscience, those terrible pangs of remorse, those harrowing recollections of the past, which crowd the brains of those who have enjoyed the happiness of a pure and refined home, who have possessed the love of father and mother, of brother and sister, who have known and experienced the sweet delights of a life of modesty and chastity, and the surroundings of refinement, affection and religion. Hence, the latter, when once convinced that their cases are hopeless, try to hush their consciences and drown their sorrows by delving into a mad whirlpool of revelry and dissipation. They seek relief from their torturing thoughts and lacerating recollections of

the past in the bottle. When the bottle fails, morphine and opium are brought into requisition, until at last their constitutions, hopelessly shattered by the severe strain put upon them by their heated, feverish, unnatural lives, succumb, and they become inmates of a mad-house or a hospital, and ere long fill a nameless and dishonored grave. Or if, perchance, life survives health and reason, they themselves seek the solace of the tomb, and with poison or a pistol, end their terrible careers. Or mayhap the dark, silent waters of some great river receive their wasted bodies and blot out the lives that nature had intended for ornaments to society and honors to their sex.

The average life of a fallen woman is but seven years; but what an eternity of woe and wretchedness is not comprised within them? The elegant houses, the costly dresses, the splendid carriages, the fragrant wines in which the most fortunate of these women revel for a year or two, are only so many reminders of their degradation, so many witnesses to their loss of everything that makes life precious to

a woman. The assumed enjoyments and pleasures of these creatures, which have dazzled and misled so many young people of both sexes, are the reverse of real. They seek self-forgetfulness at the theater, on the race-track, and at other resorts much frequented by their kind ; but the oblivion which they crave never comes in this world, save it is brought by the wine-cup or the narcotic.

One day, as I was passing along a Chicago street, I overheard two young girls, modest and ladylike in appearance, discussing the handsome dress and splendid carriage of a "queen of the demi-monde," who was just passing by. One of the girls, thoughtless and frivolous, actually envied the outcast in her velvets and diamonds, and lamented that she, too, could not enjoy such luxury without work. Alas, poor, ignorant girl ! You knew not what you said. Better, a thousand times better, that you be clothed in rags all the days of your life ; that you toil for a beggarly pittance until life shall end ; better, a thousand times better, that you do all this, than that you purchase



diamonds and velvets and carriages at the fearful price paid by the lost woman whom you have just been envying.

The horrors of the house of shame can only be hinted at in such a work as mine. Within those walls, are enacted scenes which can not be described, or even imagined, but which prove to what depths of bestiality and degradation lost human nature can sink.

The story of Blanche Bennett, which has been told in nearly every newspaper in the country, is a strikingly correct picture of the lives of many, many thousands of the fallen sisterhood.

Blanche Bennett, like so many of her class, is now waiting the end, an inmate of an insane hospital. She was found recently in a St. Louis alley, surrounded by negroes, and to the policeman who deemed it his duty to remove her to a place of safety, she said that her name was Mary Miraculous. No one could have recognized in the wretchedly clad, unwashed, stolid, stupid-looking maniac in her prison cell, the young woman who, ten years ago, was a

belle in Cincinnati. Her father was known as the prince of insurance men; was reputed to be worth \$1,000,000, and lived with his family in Clifton, the world-famed suburb of the Queen City. The fetes given at Bennett palace were events to be remembered for years. The father dearly loved the girl and spared no expense upon her education, sending her to a fashionable convent, from which she emerged a highly finished young woman. She was an expert French scholar, a fine singer, of very pleasing address, and the life of the social gatherings at her father's palace.

Cincinnati was startled one morning by a rare scandal. Blanche Bennett had eloped with a young man named Frazier, who was penniless and without valuable social connection.

The young couple went to Chicago. They did not live happily, and in less than three months Chicago was regaled with the racy details of a divorce suit. Blanche was very pretty at this time, and after the divorce was obtained she found no difficulty in securing a large number of sympathizing male friends.

She drifted to St. Louis when in the very heyday of her womanhood, and became at once the sensation in the world in which she chose to move.

A well-known saloon-keeper, in that city, took her from a house of ill-fame and supported her in princely style for a long time. But her false and feeble nature led her to be untrue to this man, and she became the mistress of a young man of fortune and sporting proclivities. At this period in her life she began to drink heavily and to take morphine. Her mind, one of the brightest of the bright, became unsteady, and she attempted suicide one day. Her friend had her removed to the insane asylum. When released, she made her way straight to this young man, and, after making an attempt upon his life, shot herself in the breast in his presence. After that her decline was rapid. Her mind grew cloudier day by day. Her wardrobe, once worthy of a princess, was replaced by the cast-off clothing of negroes, and she has walked through the street of St. Louis the most miserable and

pitiable of wrecks. People who knew her years ago have passed her on the street without dreaming of her identity. Shortly after her elopement her father met with financial reverses, and was utterly ruined. Then the world openly talked about what it had suspected for a long time, and that was that the mother of the girl, a glorious-looking blonde, was untrue to her husband, and had been long carrying on a *liaison* with a celebrated minstrel performer. The family dropped out of Cincinnati history. The mother located in Chicago and openly went to the bad. A son, quite a young man, of great promise, became the companion of dissolute characters, and in 1876, was locked up in jail for stealing the clothing of a friend who had given him shelter, and was not permitted to attend the funeral of his mother who was buried at the expense of the women of the town. The gray-haired, broken-hearted father is now occupying a minor position in connection with the Western agency of a great insurance company, which he once fairly controlled.

A sadder story than the above was never put in type. And yet there are thousands of "Blanche Bennetts" throughout the land, who have fallen from the high position of queens of society to become creatures of the gutter and the street.

In James W. Watson's familiar poem, "Beautiful Snow," are three stanzas which are supposed to be uttered by such an one as poor Blanche Bennett :

Once I was pure as the snow—but I fell;
Fell, like the snowflakes from heaven—to hell;
Fell, to be tramped as the filth of the street;
Fell, to be scoffed, to be spit on, and beat.

Pleading,

Cursing,

Dreading to die,

Selling my soul to whoever would buy,
Dealing in shame for a morsel of bread,
Hating the living and fearing the dead.
Merciful God! have I fallen so low?
And yet I was once like this beautiful snow.

Once I was fair as the beautiful snow,
With an eye like its crystals, a heart like its glow;
Once I was loved for my innocent grace—
Flattered and sought for the charms of my face.

Father,

Mother,

Sisters all,

God, and myself, I have lost by my fall.

The veriest wretch that goes shivering by
Will take a wide sweep, lest I wander too nigh;
For all that is on or about me, I know
There is nothing that's pure but the beautiful snow.

How strange it should be that this beautiful snow
Should fall on a sinner with nowhere to go!
How strange it would be, when the night comes again,
If the snow and the ice struck my desperate brain.

Fainting,

Freezing,

Dying alone,

Too wicked for prayer, too weak for my moan
To be heard in the crash of the crazy town,
Gone mad in its joy at the snow's coming down;
To lie and to die in my terrible woe,
With a bed and a shroud of the beautiful snow.

Surely there is not one redeeming feature in the life of a courtesan from the moment she commits her first sin, until the grave receives her wasted form; not one moment that the mind delights to linger upon; not one hour that the wretched creature, as she is standing upon the banks of the river, preparing to seek rest in a watery grave, can look back upon with satisfaction or contentment. Ah, if she has grievously sinned, so has she bitterly suffered, and I can not close this chapter better than by quoting Tom Hood's immortal poem, "The Bridge

of Sighs," the most touching, pathetic and powerful appeal to the world for charity to the lost sisterhood, ever penned by man :

THE BRIDGE OF SIGHTS.

"Drowned! Drowned!"—*Hamlet*.

One more unfortunate,
Weary of breath,
Rashly importunate,
Gone to her death.

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care,
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair.

Look at her garments,
Clinging like cerements,
Whilst the wave constantly
Drips from her clothing.

Take her up instantly,
Loving, not loathing.

Touch her not scornfully,
Think of her mournfully,
Gently and humanly—
Not of the stains of her;
All that remains of her
Now is pure womanly.

Make no deep scrutiny
Into her mutiny,
Rash and undutiful;
Past all dishonor,
Death has left on her
Only the beautiful.

Still, for all slips of hers—
One of Eve's family—
Wipe those poor lips of hers,
Oozing so clammily ;
Loop up her tresses,
Escaped from the comb—
Her fair auburn tresses—
Whilst wonderment guesses
Where was her home ?

Who was her father ?
Who was her mother ?
Had she a sister ?
Had she a brother ?
Or was there a dearer one
Still, and a nearer one
Yet, than all other ?

Alas, for the rarity
Of Christian charity
Under the sun !
O, it was pitiful !
Near a whole city full,
Home she had none.

Sisterly, brotherly,
Fatherly, motherly
Feelings had changed—
Love, by harsh evidence,
Thrown from its eminence ;
Even God's providence
Seeming estranged.

Where the lamps quiver
So far in the river,
With many a light

From window and casement,
From garret to basement,
She stood, with amazement,
Houseless by night.

The bleak wind of March
Made her tremble and shiver;
But not the dark arch,
Or the black flowing river;
Mad from life's history,
Glad to death's mystery,
Swift to be hurled—
Anywhere, anywhere
Out of the world.

In she plunged boldly—
No matter how coldly
The rough river ran—
Over the brink of it!
Picture it—think of it!
Dissolute man!
Lave in it, drink of it
Then, if you can.

Take her up tenderly,
Lift her with care!
Fashioned so slenderly,
Young, and so fair!

Ere her limbs, frigidly,
Stiffen too rigidly,
Decently, kindly,
Smooth and compose them;
And her eyes, close them,
Staring so blindly!
Dreadfully staring

Through muddy impurity,
As when with the daring
Last look of despairing
Fixed on futurity.

Perishing gloomily,
Spurned by contumely,
Cold inhumanity,
Burning insanity,
Into her rest!

Cross her hands humbly,
As if praying dumbly,
Over her breast!

Owning her weakness,
Her evil behavior,
And leaving, with meekness,
Her sins to her Savior.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOCIETY BUYING A SLAVE—THE FATE OF THE
OUTCAST — FASHIONABLE IMMORALITY —
MARITAL INFIDELITY — “A HARP FOR THE
MAGDALENS.”

Among the characters in Victor Hugo's great novel, “Les Miserables,” is a poor outcast named Fantine, who was driven by poverty and suffering to sell herself to a life of shame. Hugo's picture of her hapless condition is most thrilling, and his indictment of society for her ruin is scathing. I quote :

“ What is this story of Fantine ? It is society buying a slave.

“ Of whom ? Of misery, of hunger, of cold, of isolation, of abandonment, of privation. Sorrowful bargain ! A soul for a morsel of bread. Misery offers, society accepts.

“ The holy law of Jesus Christ governs our

civilization, but it does not yet penetrate it; we say that slavery has disappeared from European civilization. This is an error. Slavery exists continually; but it weighs now only upon woman, and it is called prostitution.

“It weighs upon woman, that is to say, upon weakness, upon beauty, upon maternity. This is not one of the least reproaches upon man.

“At the point of this painful drama to which we have arrived, nothing any longer remains to Fantine of what she was formerly. She has become marble in becoming base. Whoever comes in contact with her is chilled. She passes, she endures you, and she ignores you; she has a harsh and dishonored face. Life and social order have said their last word to her, all that can happen to her has happened. She has felt all, endured all, experienced all, suffered all, lost all, wept all. She is resigned, with that resignation which resembles indifference, as death resembles sleep. She no longer shuns anything. She no longer fears anything. Fall upon her all the clouds, and

roll over her all the ocean ! What matters it to her ? The sponge is saturated.

“ She thinks so, at least, but it is a mistake to imagine that one has drained the cup of fate, or sounded the depths of any human contingency.

“ Alas ! what are all these destinies thus confusedly driven onward ? Whither are they going ? Wherefore are they so ?

“ He who knows that sees through all shadows.

“ He is alone. His name is GOD.”

Victor Hugo presents the woman of sin to us in a state of utter and abject despair. She is indifferent as to what this world or the next has in store for her ; for, in Hugo’s expressive words, “ All that can happen to her has happened.” Such, at least, is her belief, and it is a belief which society has impressed upon her mind by its treatment of her. Public sentiment has regarded her as hopelessly degraded, and irreclaimably lost, and because it has so regarded her, she has, perhaps, become so in reality. But had there

been a different tone of public feeling, an ardent belief in the possibility of her reformation and salvation, her case might have been, and probably would have been, more hopeful. Society said to Fantine, "Starve or sin." She sinned, and then society said, "You have sinned. You have crossed the line of virtue. You have deliberately enrolled yourself among the votaries of vice. You have chosen to subsist upon the wages of shame. Henceforward and for ever you are an outcast, your portion is naught but misery in this world as well as in the world to come. There is no hope for you in this life, none in the life which is beyond the tomb."

That this is the attitude of society, this the tone of public sentiment, toward fallen woman, none can truthfully deny. It can only be changed by bold, persistent, resolute, unyielding agitation; by open and fearless discussion by the pulpit, by the press, on the rostrums, in books and magazines and tracts. Individual effort is what is needed; and it can accomplish a great deal. The great truth, that purity and

chastity are as obligatory upon man as upon woman, must be kept prominent. The fact that the Lord lays His injunctions in regard to the sin of lust, equally upon both sexes, must be constantly brought to the attention of the world. The man who commits adultery is just as guilty in the eyes of the Lord, as the woman who sins with him (and frequently more so), however public sentiment may look at the matter. If justice were done in this world, every lewd man would be held to the same strict accountability that the lewd woman is. Society would insist that the groom be as pure as the bride; that the husband be as faithful as the wife; that the man who visits a house of shame be just as infamous as the woman who dwells there.

It is a startling fact, and one that may well cause us to tremble for the future of our country, that the palaces of sin which abound in our great cities, and wherein dwell the slaves of whom Hugo tells us, are largely maintained by men who occupy prominent positions in society, in politics, in business, and

in the learned professions. It is notorious that in our cities and towns, judges, bankers, merchants, railroad officials, leaders in all departments of human effort, the men who direct and control the material interests of the country, are, many of them, patrons of the frail sisters whom they pass upon the street with averted gaze, as if fearing contamination if they but touched the garments of those fallen creatures. It is stated by those who ought to know, that more than two-thirds of the patrons of the houses of shame in New York and Washington are men of family; husbands and fathers, middle-aged and old men, men who are regarded by society as bright and shining lights. Truly, when those who should be the moral guides of the community go astray, when those who should aim to spread virtue and purity through the land help to maintain the greatest evil of the day, it is time that the note of warning be sounded from every possible quarter. Immoral men make our laws in the halls of Congress and in State legislatures; immoral men are charged with the execution of them, both in

federal and State governments. Men of the loosest character are at the head of many of our great corporations, such as banks, railroad and steamship companies, etc. Many of our merchant princes, our great manufacturers and our bonanza kings are notorious for their personal profligacy and almost open licentiousness. But for the class of men I have named—the men of power, of wealth, of position, of education—two-thirds of our houses of shame would be closed from lack of support. If these men were true to themselves, faithful to the great trusts reposed in them, loyal to their wives, dutiful towards their families, mindful of their religious and moral obligations, the number of “society’s slaves” would be reduced at least one-half.

It is a great error, although a common one, to suppose that the social evil is supported mainly by the so-called criminal classes, or by those who make no pretensions to decency or respectability. Such is not the case. On the contrary, it is as I have said, that the men to whom we should naturally look for

better things are the main support and dependence of the vast army of fallen women, whose sad condition has excited our commisera-
tion.

In this connection I feel that a word should be said touching the shameful loosening of marital obligations in so-called fashionable society, not only in this country, but in England and in the countries of continental Europe. Royalty itself has set a frightful example of open licentiousness by husbands and fathers; and the nobility has not been slow to imitate the example of those who hover near the throne.

The story of broken vows, of violated pledges, of dishonored promises, made at the marriage altar, has been told repeatedly in the divorce courts, both of the United States and Europe. Among those who have figured in these trials are the leaders in society; those who set the fashions for the rest of the world to follow; those whose high positions ought to make them even more careful than others of lower rank in complying with the requirements

of purity and morality. It is unnecessary for me to refer by name to the scandal trials, whose details have filled the columns of the greatest daily papers in the world, or to expand upon the shocking revelations of marital infidelity, of gross licentiousness, of unrestrained passion, made in these trials. They tell their own story and carry their own moral. And yet it is fair to conclude that where one case of married unfaithfulness is thus brought before the world, scores remain secrets in the bosoms of the guilty persons. Licentiousness has ruined many of the greatest empires and republics in the world's history ; and we may well tremble for the future of our beloved country when we reflect upon the thinly disguised profligacy which prevails among the wealthy and fashionable of our great cities.

As to the unfaithful husbands among this class, their name is legion ; and there is every reason to believe that the number of false wives is very much larger than we have any conception of. Truly it is a frightful

thing to think of, and demands the earnest, thoughtful attention of all who wish to see the world better and purer.

There is not a city or town in the country which has not its so-called "fashionable scandals;" not one in which the improprieties and adventures of beautiful and fascinating women in what are called the "best circles," are not subjects of public notoriety or matters of quiet gossip; not one in which the names of some of society's queens are not sullied with suspicions and tainted with doubts. This sad state of affairs is to be ascribed very largely to the popular social amusements and dissipations to which I have referred elsewhere. The dance, the theater, the wine cup, the race-course, the idle frivolity and sensual luxury of the watering-places, all have a tendency to draw the husband and wife apart, to make them depend less and less upon one another, to loosen the mutual obligations which should bind them together, to render them more and more unmindful of their sacred duties. Alas, all the lost women are not inmates of houses



of shame ; all the erring sisters are not known to the world as courtesans. There are many women in fashionable society who carry about in their bosoms the burden of guilty secrets ; many who, despite their pretensions to purity and their external surroundings of propriety and respectability, are at heart and in fact as vile as those upon whom public sentiment has fixed the awful brand of shame ; less excusable, too, because they have sinned without any reason, and succumbed to the wiles of the libertine, although surrounded by comforts and luxuries and all the restraints of home and family and friends. There are skeletons in many closets which we do not dream of. Society, which admits notorious libertines and seducers to its parlors and drawing-rooms, while it excludes their helpless victims ; society, which fosters such immoral amusements as the dance and the theater ; society, which tolerates the grossest vices in the rich and the powerful, is just as much to blame for these scandals, for these dishonored homes, for these ghastly skeletons as it is for the sin and

wretchedness of the helpless slaves of open shame.

All of these things will continue until the tone of public sentiment is materially elevated ; until the fashionable amusements which are now so popular, are wiped out or radically changed ; until husbands treat their wives with the tenderness and affection they accord to sweethearts, and look to home and family for the peace and happiness they now seek in fashionable excitement and dissipation ; until the crime of matrimonial infidelity is constantly held up to the world in all its hideousness and deformity, and the consciences of the devotees of fashion are reached.

Sexual sin is the crying evil of the day. Prostitution, open or secret, is sapping the vitals of our country's greatness, undermining its power, corrupting its youth, desolating its homes, breaking hearts, wrecking souls. Let us all, each to the extent of his ability and influence, great or small, do what he can to diminish this evil ; to raise the tone of society ; to save lovely maidens from the snares of the

tempter; to punish the vile men who prey upon youth and innocence; to keep husbands and wives faithful and loyal to each other; aye, even to take from the street and the brothel the depraved outcast, and lead her to the Savior, who said to the erring woman of Capernaum, "Thy sins, which are many, are forgiven."

I can not conclude this chapter better than by publishing a beautiful poem by Winona Rivers, of Fort Wayne, Ind, which holds up to the daughter of shame bright hope of salvation:

HOPE FOR THE FALLEN.

"If any among ye be without sin, let him cast the first stone."

I know there's a harp lying low by the river,
Its sweet beauty dimmed by a Magdalen's tears;
She kneels there in sorrow, her frail arms extended;
She pleads, but in vain—they turn a deaf ear;
She is pleading to tell them the sorrowful story
Of a pure, perfect love, that knew nothing of sin;
A love that might have been any man's glory.
She shyly and tenderly lavished on him.

But her sisters pass by her,—they scorn her sad story;
The harp lying dark by the waters of sin
May lie there forever; they will not restore it,
Nor make her dark life what it once would have been

Had not the base tempter, with sinister cunning,
And vile, hellish arts, by pure (!) woman upheld,
Stole into her Eden and plucked the bright jewel,
Leaving her to her sorrow, whatever befel.

But listen, from whence come those sweet strains of
music

The vibrating air wafts low where she lies ?
Her tear-bedimmed face she uplifts to the moonlight,
With one pale, slender hand she shades her dark eyes ;
She looks in on a scene that fills her with hatred,—
She sees her seducer, the cause of her sin,
The center of honor, all eager to hear him,
While wide through the land the earthly harps ring.

Christian mothers smile on him,—they bring their young
daughters ;

In honor they place them upon his right hand,
While she, the poor victim, left alone in her sorrow,—
Do you wonder a demon's let loose in the land ?

Then let us remember the words of our Savior,
Nor scorn her who sits where the dark waters glide ;
The sweet harp of heaven shall not ring its full num-
bers,

Till redeemed, in her whiteness, she stands by His
side.

WINONA RIVERS.

Fort Wayne, Allen County, Ind.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW TO SAVE OUR ERRING SISTERS—DUTY OF THE CHURCH—WHAT HAS BEEN DONE IN THIS FIELD.

In the preceding chapters I have endeavored, in my feeble way, to point out the main causes of the social evil; to describe the manifold temptations by which young girls are constantly surrounded, and which result in the ruin of so many of them; to show how society is responsible for the existence of so many of these temptations, and how unjustly and wickedly public sentiment forces girls who have taken a single false step, down into the mire, and remorselessly keeps them down, closing the doors of all honorable avocations against them. I have related a number of sad stories from real life, each of which points its own moral, in connection with the most vital

and important subject upon which I have been writing. It is my purpose, in this concluding chapter, to make a few suggestions as to the duty of Christian people with reference to fallen women ; and in relation to all the great problems of this most important subject.

A little over three years ago, I was in the pursuit of a wild and reckless career. For many years I had been steeped in all kinds of vice and debauchery ; I had been a professional gambler, engrossed in all the evil practices and low amusements which that class of men revel in. My life had been for fifteen years a succession of hideous orgies and Bacchanalian revelries. One night I wandered into a temperance meeting in the city of my residence. Scarcely had I entered the building than I was surrounded by young men and women, who earnestly implored me to sign the temperance pledge. Every one knew my personal character and past career ; but, in spite of all that, they extended the right hand of fellowship to me, welcoming me heartily to the meeting, and used every effort to induce me to abandon

intemperate habits, and join the grand army of total abstinence.

I attended the meetings for several evenings before I concluded to make an effort and sign the pledge, I finally took that step and I have never regretted it for one moment. In another work* I have told the story in detail ; told how I was lifted up and encouraged by the temperance people of both sexes, how Christian men and women opened their doors to me, invited me to their homes, and endeavored, by every means in their power, to surround me with pure and holy influences and keep me in the better paths, which, after long wanderings in the highways of sin, I had chosen for the rest of my life journey. With these surroundings, I was soon led to embrace the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and enlist myself as an humble follower of the Lamb.

No words can express my gratitude to those noble people who labored so hard to lift me up out of the degradation in which I had so long been steeped, and place my feet upon the solid

* "The Converted Gambler," by Mason Long.

rocks of temperance, virtue and religion. I shall never cease to bless them, and honor them, and pray for God's blessing upon them, while I live. I am but one of many men who had fallen very low, who have been redeemed through such agencies; and the good work still goes on.

But ever since my reformation I have been constantly asking of myself: "If fallen men can be thus saved, why not fallen women? If men who have for long years been sunken in vice and debauchery, who have rioted in the blackest and most degrading excesses, who have scoffed at religion and sneered at virtue, whose consciences seemed to have died within them,—if such men can thus be reformed and become virtuous, sober, religious, good and useful members of society, can nothing be done for the wretched women, who, like them, have been following a course of profligacy and recklessness?"

In my humble opinion much, very much can be done to save fallen women. I have conversed upon this subject with a great many

ministers of the Gospel, and with scarcely an exception they agree with me that much can be accomplished in this direction, and that the church should be alive to its duty.

In my opinion one of the most important things to attempt in this connection is an elevation of the tone of public sentiment. It is as important to save tens of thousands of young women, now pure and innocent, from joining the ranks of the fallen, as it is to rescue those who have already plunged into the vortex.

How is this to be done? I answer, "In many ways." We must look for the causes which lead to prostitution, and if possible destroy them in their incipiency. We must endeavor to remove the many temptations which society now throws about young girls, and thus lures them to their ruin. The pulpit must thunder against the theater, the wine cup, the races, the dance, and the many other fashionable amusements of the day, which, seductive and fascinating as they may appear to the young, yet result in many wrecked and blasted lives, many disgraced and deserted

homes, many broken hearts, and many lost souls. If you would have your daughters modest, pure and virtuous, teach them to shun these attractive pleasures as they would the crawling serpent. So long as these fashionable amusements are encouraged, or even tolerated, so long will libertines and seducers ply their devilish arts with success, and gather in thousands of fresh victims; so long will myriads of pure, modest young maidens be tempted across the line of virtue into the dwellings of shame; so long will the great procession of disease and death move on, leaving woe and desolation in its pathway, and sweeping many precious souls into an eternity of blackest night.

A great step can be taken in the way of saving young women from ruin, by affording avenues of useful and honorable employment to all who desire to earn their bread without shame. I have pointed out, in this volume, the sad fact that a very large proportion of our fallen women are made such by poverty. They are unable to obtain work, and even if they do succeed, in a majority of instances they are

scarcely paid enough to keep body and soul together. The sewing girl, toiling twelve or fourteen hours out of the twenty-four in a close, ill-ventilated room, bending over her machine and contracting those fell diseases dyspepsia and consumption; the saleswoman, standing upon her feet as many hours in each day in a crowded store; the factory girl, toiling the livelong day at arduous work; these and many other poor women, working like slaves and not earning enough to purchase proper food and suitable clothing, turn at last, in despair, to the paths of forbidden sin, and exchange starving virtue for feasting vice. When the glad day comes that all girls are educated with a view to possible dependence upon their own resources, and when public sentiment will not justify employers in paying men what they earn and women only half so much; when that day comes one of the great fountains of prostitution will be dried up. But until that day women in want will look upon the full purse of the libertine with envy, and will fall.

Of course, so long as we tolerate in men what we condemn in women, so long will the ranks of vice be filled. When we apply the same standard in judging men that we now use in judging women, there will be a great purification in our morals. When libertines, seducers and adulterers find themselves excluded from decent society, debarred from official position, and shunned by the refined and the virtuous, when pure young maidens demand of their would-be husbands as chaste records as they themselves possess; when the vows taken at the marriage altar are held to be as binding upon the man as upon the woman; when these desirable changes are brought about, the domain of sexual vice will be handed over to the exclusive possession of those who make no claims to respectability or decency, and the social evil will find itself confined to narrow boundaries. I admit that this day seems far distant, but each can do something toward hastening it. The churches can do much, and I know that, as a rule, our clergymen would gladly take the lead if their

hands were not shackled by public sentiment.

I have just touched upon the various means which may be adopted to save young women from becoming prostitutes ; now let us consider how we may reach those who have already fallen. I have conversed with a number of clergymen upon this subject, and they all seem anxious to do what they can in this direction ; but they complain that they can not get the sympathy and support of their congregations. Those who are the most earnest and active in their efforts to save fallen men, who are ever ready to give to the most besotted drunkard the right hand of fellowship, who are zealous in every good work but this, shrug their shoulders and stand aloof when the claims of the fallen sisterhood are presented to their attention. With very few exceptions, it is almost impossible to interest women in their unfortunate sisters. Women who will use every effort to lift the drunkard out of the gutter, and to reform the most vicious and desperate of men,—women who are foremost in

every charity,—seem to have little compassion upon their wretched sisters. If a clergyman tries to do anything for these poor outcasts, his motives are oftentimes impugned, his character is questioned, and not seldom he finds his usefulness in other fields of labor at an end. Women generally seem to have unlimited confidence in the success of efforts to save fallen men, but none at all in any project for the elevation of the fallen of their own sex. They proverbially say that it is no use to try; that the courtesans of the city are hopelessly degraded, and that there is nothing to be done but let them drift on to destruction. So long as this spirit is alive among the female members of our churches, so long will our ministers find it very difficult to accomplish much in trying to save fallen women. In any good work the clergyman must have not only the sympathy, but the prayers, the cordial support, the active co-operation of his flock; but when instead of these he meets with sneers, and shrugs, and covert opposition, and sly innuendoes and predictions of failure, he can of course

accomplish little. In my conversation and correspondence with ministers, I have found them, almost without exception, alive to the great importance of this field of labor; fully conscious that it is being neglected, and exceedingly anxious to do something. Many of them have tried to awaken the sensibilities of their congregations in this matter, but their success has not been up to the measure of their expectations. A great many of them have undertaken systematic labors among the women of shame, with varying success. Most of them report that there are many difficulties to overcome, and so there are; but with faith and prayer and steady, persevering work these obstacles can be removed. All who have done work among this unfortunate class, report that they find some women so utterly degraded, so completely abandoned to all sense of decency, so entirely reckless as to be, apparently, beyond the reach of any human agency. But these are not in the majority. In most of the fallen women something is found which can be appealed to; some tender chord in their bos-

oms which can be touched ; some sweet recollection of youth and home which can be revived ; some memory of a father or a mother, of a sister or brother, or perchance of "a dearer one still and a nearer one yet" which may be called up ; some deep yearning after modesty and virtue, some inherent aspiration for a better life, some hope of salvation in the future which may be resuscitated. Many times the impressions thus produced may prove transitory and fade away, but the tender chord has been touched, the better feelings have been once more aroused, and there is something to work on. In such cases perseverance will be almost sure to bring a glorious reward, and the woman in whom so much remains that is good, may be saved from her life of ignominy.

Those who have labored in this vineyard are surprised at many things they learn of the secret lives of fallen women. In a majority of instances these unfortunate beings have many noble traits of character, which shine out to especial advantage in contrast with their reckless and dissolute lives. Very frequently they

have children whom they dearly love, and whom they are educating at schools and colleges and bringing them up in ignorance of their mother's shame or even of her identity. These women keep aloof from their children, whom they would give all their treasures to see, in order that those loved ones may enter the world without any idea of their origin. Not a few young men and young women are to-day attending our best educational institutions, whose mothers (whom they believe to be dead) are inmates of houses of sin in our large cities.

In a great many cases fallen women devote much of their earnings to the support of indigent relatives, perhaps of parents, or sisters, or brothers, and not infrequently of more distant relatives. In other ways these fallen creatures show generosity and charity. Of course these things do not in the least excuse their manner of life, but they show that there is something of good left in them, some foundation for better things, some encouragement for those who seek to elevate them morally and socially.

A great many instances might be related of women who have been lifted from the lowest depths, taken out of the very slums, as it were, and have become active, consistent Christians and useful members of society.

The great evangelist, Moody, who has labored so much among this unfortunate class in our large cities, in a sermon to erring women, related the following incident:

"At one of my meetings in Philadelphia, a fallen woman came into the inquiry room and threw herself down on the floor. The Christian helpers talked and talked to her, but could get nothing out of her; they couldn't do a thing with her. The Hon. Geo. H. Stuart came to me and said: 'We wish you would come, we don't know what to make of her.' She was weeping bitterly, and as far off as I was, I could hear her sobs all over the room. So I went and said: 'What is the trouble?' At last she spoke, and the bitterness of her despairing voice went to my heart. 'I have fallen from everything pure, and God can not save me; there is no hope.' I told her ten-



CHILDHOOD'S INNOCENCE.

derly that God could still lift her up and save her. I said : 'Are you only just willing to be forgiven ? A merciful Father is waiting and longing to pardon.' She said at last, she could not abandon her course, as no one would give her a home. But that difficulty was got around by my assuring her kind friends would provide for her ; and then she yielded, and that same day was given a pleasant place in the home of a Presbyterian minister. But for forty-eight hours after entering her new home that poor reclaimed woman cried, day and night ; and we went for her mother, and on hearing her story she clasped her hands and cried :

“ ‘ Has my daughter really repented ? Thank God for His mercy ; my heart has just been breaking. I’ve prayed so long for her without result ; take me to her.’ And that reformed daughter of sin has lived consistently ever since, and when I last was in Philadelphia, she was one of the most esteemed members in that Presbyterian church.”

In one of the thriving towns of northern

Indiana, two or three years since, a large number were savingly converted, and added to the Baptist church of that place, the pastor of which was a most ardent and zealous Christian worker.

Several fallen men were brought into the fold, and a great many of the world's people were blessed with a change of heart. Among those who attended the meetings and exhibited the deepest interest, were two women of the town. They were present at every meeting and seemed greatly impressed. The pastor, noticing their constant presence at the services and their evident earnestness, but knowing nothing of their characters and past history, did his utmost to bring them into the fold. Soon he found that he was severely censured by many of his congregation, because of the notoriety these women had attained. But he was satisfied that they were under conviction, that they had repented, in sackcloth and ashes, of their sins, and were yearning to lead better and purer lives in the future. He felt it his duty to do what lay in his power to assist them, and

hence he labored with all his zeal for their conversion. The result was all, and even more than he could hope for. The fallen sisters made a public profession of Christ, and in spite of the lack of confidence on the part of a number of the church members, were admitted to the church. They met with little recognition or encouragement, but so pure, consistent and blameless have been their lives, that they have now forced the respect and confidence even of those who sneered and scoffed at them when they first attended the revival meetings. The pastor informed me that he had among his flock no more zealous, earnest and active Christian than one of these women, who so long traveled in the forbidden paths of sinful pleasure, and seemed to all external appearances to be hopelessly lost.

A clergyman of the M. E. church told me of an incident somewhat similar to the above, which occurred during his pastoral experience. He was conducting a series of protracted meetings. A feeling of deep religious interest pervaded the community, and a rich harvest of

souls was being reaped for Christ. At one of the meetings, several women of bad reputation entered the church and took their seats. During the exercises of the evening they were greatly affected, and were evidently under deep conviction. They wept freely, and seemed to feel a profound sense of their lost condition. After the preaching it was customary at these meetings for the pastor to invite all who were desirous of the prayers of God's people to go forward to the mourner's bench. On the evening in question he was requested by several prominent members of his church not to make the usual announcement, "for if you do," they said, "those women will come forward, and will want to joint our church. This will cause a great scandal." The minister very promptly told these "prominent members" that salvation was open to all, even to fallen women, and that they were not the kind of soldiers that are needed in the army of the Lord. The fallen sisters went to the mourner's bench, and asked for the prayers of God's people. These prayers were answered, and the repentant courtesans

were admitted to the church, and are still useful and consistent members thereof.

An humble but devout member of one of the leading churches of Fort Wayne was, but five years ago, one of the most vile and degraded of women. Ever since she was admitted to the church she has given every evidence of sincere, heartfelt repentance, and her life has been as pure and blameless as the most exacting critic could wish.

I might multiply these instances almost indefinitely, but enough has been related to show that the vilest harlot of the streets is not beyond the reach of Divine Grace. If our churches would but sustain the clergymen in their efforts to reach this most miserable and unfortunate class, very many of them would be saved from lives of degradation, and become useful members of society. The great trouble seems to be that, having once determined to reform and to lead better and purer lives, they receive so little encouragement from those who should lend them helping hands. On the contrary they are beset with obstacles at

every step, and are discouraged and disheartened by the sneers, the jibes and the unkind predictions, uttered by those whose solemn duty it is to aid these erring ones in every possible way.

Away off in Jerusalem, nearly nineteen hundred years ago, our Savior one day "sat at meat" in the house of Simon, a wealthy Pharisee. As He entered this house He was followed by a sinful woman of the town. And in her hands she carried "an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at His feet behind Him, weeping, and began to wash His feet with her tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment." Of course, the Pharisees, then as now, marveled greatly that the Savior would allow a poor, lost woman to come near Him. But He rebuked them, and, after one of His beautiful parables, said:

"Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered into thy house, thou gavest me no water

for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

“Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman, since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kiss my feet.

“Mine head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment.

“Wherefore, I say unto thee, her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.

“And He said unto her, ‘Thy sins are forgiven; Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.’”

One day while the Savior was teaching in the temple on the Mount of Olives, the Scribes and Pharisees brought before Him a woman who had been taken in adultery, caught in the very act, there to receive the sentence which the Jewish law provided for fallen women: that she be stoned to death. The man who

sinned with the woman was not taken. He was allowed to escape, and the poor victim of his passions was left to bear all the burden, all the shame, all the punishment. There she stood in the Temple, before the vast multitude who were listening to the Lord's preaching, awaiting her doom. In all that great crowd there was no one to speak a word for the adulteress ; none to extend a kindly hand towards her ; none to demand that her infamy be shared by the man who had seduced her. The crowd clamored for the stoning of the woman, but Jesus uttered those memorable words : " He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." But the stone wasn't thrown. One by one those who had been clamoring for the fallen woman's blood, slunk away, rebuked by their own consciences. " And when Jesus lifted up His eyes, He saw the woman standing before him all alone. And He said :

“ ‘ Woman, where are those thine accusers ?
Hath no man condemned thee ? ’

“She said, ‘No man, Lord.’

“And Jesus said unto her; ‘Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.’ It was not the business of Christ to take the law into His own hands and enforce it; that was the duty of the Jewish magistrate; hence he said: “Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more.”

Reader, there are thousands of fallen women all over the land who can be saved, if but the proper effort is made. There are thousands of pure women who can be preserved from the awful fate to which they are hastening, if we but stretch forth our hands. Shall we try? Or shall we continue to open our doors to the seducers and the libertines, and drive out their wronged, helpless victims to shame and infamy? Shall we still honor those vices in men which we loathe in women? Shall we go into the highways and byways, pick the fallen men out of the gutters and leave the fallen women to perish? Shall we forget that most of these miserable outcasts,

whose wrecked womanhood awakens our disgust, were made what they are by the diabolical machinations of wicked men? God pity them; God help them to rise out of the mire in which they are so deeply sunken, and turn their faces heavenward.

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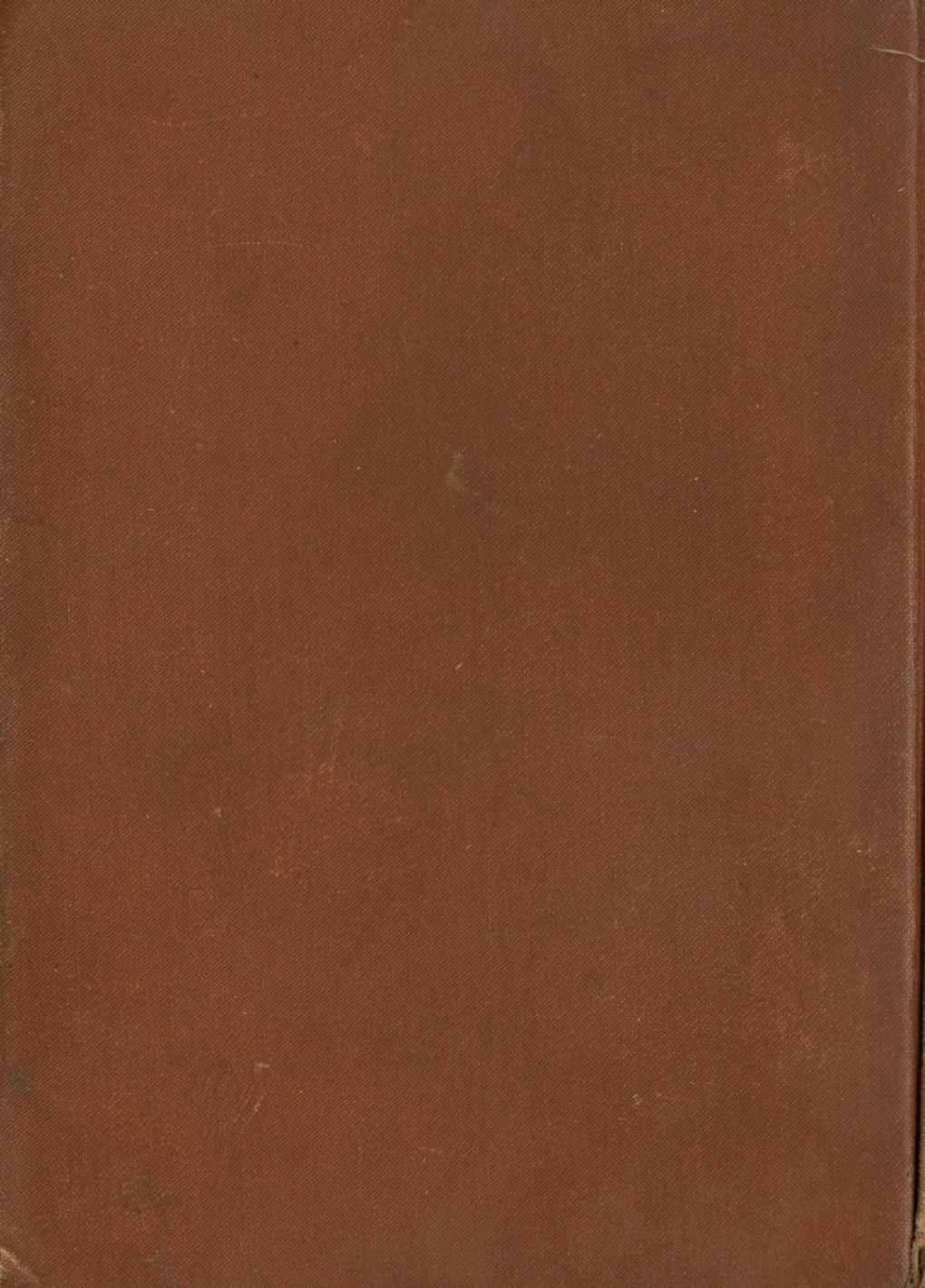
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